

AMERICAN LIFE IN LITERATURE

VOLUME I

EDITED BY

JAY B. HUBBELL

*Chairman of the Editorial Board of AMERICAN LITERATURE
Professor of American Literature, Duke University*

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PREFACE

In this edition of a text which first appeared in 1936, a large number of new selections have been added, particularly in the contemporary period; much more space is given to the major writers, the historical and biographical parts have been expanded and in large part rewritten, and the entire text has been reset and issued in a new and more attractive format. Some of the changes have been made in response to the suggestions of teachers and students who have used the book either in the regular edition or in one of the two editions put out for servicemen in 1944 and 1945 by the U. S. Armed Forces Institute. The new edition preserves those features of the old which commended themselves to teachers and students. These may be summarized as follows:

1. The title of the book — *American Life in Literature* — was chosen to suggest that emphasis is placed upon our literature as an expression of American thought and as a record of American life. I looked for selections which picture our multifarious life in some characteristic manner or give expression to American thinking about American problems. One potent reason for studying our own literature, as noted in my original Preface, is that, if men and women are to live intelligently in this country, they must know their own background in the life and thought of the United States. Since 1936 interest in American literature, history, and culture has markedly increased.

This edition contains some additional materials which serve to emphasize the close connection of our literature with its social, cultural, economic, religious, and political background. However, American literature is not treated merely as a record of changing political and economic thought. *American Life in Literature* is still primarily a collection of writings whose chief value lies in their literary quality. Ideas and movements come and go, but memorable writing remains.

2. It is a truism to say that one cannot know American literature who knows no other literature. Yet the subject is still too often considered as though it had grown up in isolation from those European literatures which are its background and of which it is in a sense the continuation. Until the nineteenth century our literary fashions came from overseas, and since that time they have often been determined by developments in Europe. At the very time our writers were doing their utmost to create an indigenous literature, economic and cultural forces were making literature more and more an international affair. Those intensely American writers, Emerson, Whitman, and Mark Twain, were no more immune to these international influences than Irving, Longfellow, and Lowell. In the twentieth century,

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American literature has become one of the significant world literatures, and its influence is now felt across the Pacific as well as the Atlantic. I have often quoted what European — especially English — critics have said of our writers, for these often give us a better perspective upon our literary achievements.

English literature includes a substantial body of writing dealing with America, some of which has considerable interest for American readers. I have included a number of selections from British writers. These, it seems to me, serve several useful purposes. They are worth reading for their intrinsic merits; they give one a different view of American life, they help to place American literature in the wider framework of the literatures of the English-speaking world; and they illustrate changing modes of writing in England, where our literary fashions were set for two centuries and more. Without some knowledge of literary developments in England, one cannot fully understand the work of Byrd, Franklin, Irving, or Cooper — to name only four of the many writers of whom the same statement might be made. Some of the selections included have an especial importance for students of American literature. A cultivated American cannot afford to be ignorant of Matthew Arnold's "Civilization in the United States" or Edmund Burke's "On Conciliation with America."

In the new edition all selections from English writers have been placed in Appendices at the end of each volume to prevent any possible confusion with the selections from American writers.

3. In the new, as in the old, edition I have included certain illustrative materials designed to help the student understand better the significance of what he reads. Some of these materials explain the writer's literary aims and methods; others give his view of the special problem of the American author trying to create a national literature in a new country. Also included are materials designed to bring alive, so to speak, certain major figures, like Emerson, Hawthorne, and Whitman, who belong to an era which often seems remote and strange to the undergraduate mind. The small college libraries do not all have copies of Moncure Conway's *Autobiography* or Howells's *Literary Friends and Acquaintance*; and in the larger institutions it is hardly practicable for the instructor to send large classes to the library for brief passages in such books as these.

Personal letters form the largest and most important class of such materials. A letter, as every instructor knows, often gives the student a more vivid impression of an author's personality than can be had from more formal writing. Furthermore, the literary qualities of the letters of Byrd, Franklin, Irving, Emerson, Lowell, Holmes, Melville, Lincoln, Emily Dickinson, Henry James, and Mark Twain are great enough to warrant their inclusion in any anthology, quite apart from the light they throw upon the personalities and literary aims of the writers. The new edition omits a number of the letters included in the old edition, but enough have been kept to serve my original purpose.

4. In the 1949 edition, as in the earlier one, I have looked for selections not only excellent in themselves but also unhackneyed and not too difficult for the undergraduate student. One anthologist tends to inherit from his predecessors old favorites like "A Psalm of Life" and "The Barefoot Boy." I included Longfellow's "A Ballad of the French Fleet" because it seemed to me a better and less hackneyed poem than "The Wreck of the Hesperus," and I chose Emerson's "Illusions" as at once a better and a less difficult essay than "The Over-Soul."

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In some instances — Whittier's "The Reformer" is an example — I chose a selection because it had a special significance for the author.

The new edition contains important materials for which permission was not available in 1936. The most conspicuous instance is the poems of Emily Dickinson, most of which are now out of copyright; but there are others, among them Stephen Vincent Benét's "Litany for Dictatorships." Also included are a number of selections for which there was not room in 1936. Among them are Hawthorne's "Rappaccini's Daughter" and "The Birthmark," Edith Wharton's "Xingu," and the selections from Gamaliel Bradford, Caroline Matilda Kirkland, and the early humorists. In response to requests from teachers, several new selections such as Emerson's little book, *Nature*, and Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience" have been added.

In this edition are additional materials for the more important writers — those whose work every teacher will wish his students to read. Among the authors given more space are Jonathan Edwards, Benjamin Franklin, Irving, Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Poe, Melville, Bret Harte, Mark Twain, Henry James, Emily Dickinson, Stephen Crane, and Ernest Hemingway.

In the contemporary period I have used additional material by T. S. Eliot, Robinson Jeffers, Archibald MacLeish, Stephen Vincent Benét, and Sinclair Lewis. In the same period I have included for the first time selections by Justice O. W. Holmes, Edmund Wilson, John Dos Passos, Thomas Wolfe, John Steinbeck, Dorothy Parker, and Katherine Anne Porter. In a few instances an old selection has been dropped and a new and more suitable one by the same writer included in its stead. Among such new selections are Eugene O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones*, Van Wyck Brooks's "On Literature Today," and Willa Cather's "Neighbour Rosicky."

Extracts from novels are used only when it seemed otherwise impossible to represent an important author properly. Certain writers, however, notably Brown, Cooper, Howells, and Ellen Glasgow, either wrote no short stories or left none brief enough or significant enough to be included. Yet one cannot afford to leave out writers as important as these. In reprinting chapters from novels, I have looked for passages which could best stand alone and which were at the same time representative and excellent in themselves. It is assumed that instructors who use this text will follow the now general practice of assigning for outside reading novels by Hawthorne, Melville, Howells, Mark Twain, Henry James, and others.

I have written unusually full biographical and critical sketches of more than a dozen major writers. It is impossible to require students to read biographies of all these authors, and the sketches given in reference books often do not effectively serve the teacher's needs. I have given explanatory footnotes at the bottom of the page where I felt they were indispensable, but I have only rarely included information readily accessible in the excellent college dictionaries, one of which every student is presumed to own and use.

The historical interchapters, revised and considerably expanded, are intended to supply an outline of our literary history and also the necessary background information about political, economic, social, and cultural developments. These chapters include new materials dealing particularly with ideas and political developments. There is an added section on Jacksonian democracy and another on Transcendentalism. The account of Transcendentalism is taken primarily from the writings of contemporaries who were in a position to speak from observation and experience. There is also a fuller discussion of American music,

PREFACE-----

painting, sculpture, and architecture, and examples serve to point out the connection between literature and the other arts.

In the present edition authors are arranged more nearly in strict chronological order than in the 1936 edition. I have, however, tried to make the teacher's task easier by certain groupings and juxtapositions within the various periods. The difficulty with the strict chronological order is that it often separates writers who should be considered together. Poe, Holmes, and Lincoln were all born in the year 1809, but they belong to widely differing geographical regions and they represent different types of writing. Lowell, Melville, and Whitman were all born in 1819, but the first two matured early while Whitman's best work comes so late that he is studied with the writers who come to maturity after 1870. In the period 1830-1870 I have grouped the Southern writers together, and I have placed Melville immediately after Hawthorne because of their intimacy at the time Melville was writing *Moby-Dick*. The order adopted for this period is intended to illustrate the growth of romanticism from Kennedy and Simms to its culmination in Emerson and Thoreau, who are placed immediately before Whitman and Emily Dickinson. Other groupings and juxtapositions will be clear to any teacher. Although I have tried to lighten the teacher's task, I would not dream of prescribing the order in which the various selections should be studied or which should be emphasized or omitted.

I have been at some pains to secure the best available texts for the various selections included. Except in some of the earlier selections I have not modernized either spelling or punctuation. It has not seemed worth while, however, to reproduce the confusing punctuation and capitalization of Washington's *Farewell Address* or Captain John Smith's *Generall Historie of Virginia*. Dates have been given for each selection when I could find them. Those in italics represent dates of composition; those in Roman, dates of publication. In the historical interchapters and biographical sketches I have indicated omissions by the customary three dots (. . .). In the selections themselves, however, where the usual method would often be ambiguous, I have used three hyphens (- - -) instead.

From those who read this book I shall welcome corrections of typographical and factual errors as well as suggestions and criticisms of every kind.

Under the head of Acknowledgments I have indicated my indebtedness to the many persons who have helped me in the preparation of the two editions of this book. Here I take occasion to make a general acknowledgment of indebtedness to my students and to the fraternity of scholars whose investigations in recent years have done so much to provide teacher and anthologist alike the full and accurate information they need.

J. B. H.

Duke University
Durham, North Carolina

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I

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I wish to acknowledge the unfailing courtesy and helpfulness of the officials of the Duke University Library. My sister, Miss Ruth Hubbell, of the Washington Public Library, has looked up materials in the Library of Congress for me.

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J. B. H.

Duke University
Durham, North Carolina

I

THE
COLONIAL
PERIOD

1607 - 1765

THE COLONIAL PERIOD

1607-1765

In the central medallion is the *Mayflower*, which brought the Pilgrims to Plymouth in 1620. Below, center, with the lamp in his hand, stands Roger Williams, advocate of religious toleration. To his left are one of the Pilgrim Fathers and the kneeling figures of Anne Hutchinson, Cotton Mather, John Cotton, Samuel Sewall, Edward Winslow, and John Winthrop. In the foreground the Indian Squanto offers an ear of Indian corn. In the lower right-hand corner Thomas Morton dances with an Indian woman around the maypole at Merry Mount while Captain Miles Standish looks on with disapproval. Above them, Jonathan Edwards preaches from his pulpit; above him, witches and angels fly across the sky. On Edwards's left, the head of King Philip is displayed on a pike.

In the lower left-hand corner William Penn is treating with the Indians. Behind him stands John Woolman, Quaker diarist. Figures in the lower left-hand corner represent the introduction of slavery in Virginia. The Cavalier with torch and sword above them represents Bacon's Rebellion; in the background Pocahontas rescues Captain John Smith from Powhatan's executioners. In the distance pioneer axmen are felling trees in a forest which shelters an Indian bark house.

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He is an American, who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. . . . Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labours and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world.

—CRÈVECŒUR, *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782).

I

In the history of western Europe the discovery of America in 1492 was an event of perhaps equal importance with the Renaissance and the Reformation in opening men's eyes to the nature of the world they lived in and in changing the order of their lives. The modern world was then emerging from the medieval, and it had progressed still further by 1607, when the first permanent English colony was established at Jamestown. The scientific discoveries of Copernicus and Galileo, the philosophical speculations of Bacon, the revival of classical learning, the translation of the Bible into the vernacular, and the invention of printing all contributed to the breakdown of the dogmatism and authority which characterized medieval thought in religion and government. The age of chivalry was past, and feudalism was on its way out. A middle class was developing which was more and more to determine the course of events. When the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth in 1620, democratic forces in England were already in motion that would in a quarter of a century result in the dethroning of the King and the establishment of a British Commonwealth under Oliver Cromwell. It is against such a background as this that one should see the establishment of English colonies in the New World. If Leif Ericsson's discovery of New England in A.D. 1000 had been followed by extensive colonization, the history of the North American continent would be vastly different from what it is.

Spain and Portugal were quick to follow up Columbus's discoveries, and they soon established colonies in South and Central America. One hundred and fifteen years, however, elapsed before the English founded their first permanent colony. The French meanwhile had staked out vast claims in Canada and the Mississippi Valley. Slow as the English seem now to have been, their system of colonization was better fitted to survive. The Spaniards and the French laid claim to vast areas, but the English settled the land as they went westward, taking over as thoroughly as their Anglo-Saxon ancestors had taken over England from the Britons.

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Of the thirteen English colonies which won their independence in the Revolutionary War, the two oldest, Virginia and Massachusetts, go back to the first quarter of the seventeenth century; Georgia, the youngest, was not chartered until 1732, the year in which George Washington was born, a century and a quarter after Jamestown. The period of American apprenticeship to England, if we may call it that, extended from 1607 down to 1775, as long a time as the period between the Revolution and the Second World War. For half their history Virginia and Massachusetts were British colonies rather than states in the American republic.

The English influence in our history is a deep and long-continued one, but the Americans who fought the War for Independence are hardly to be described as English. "Contrary to a widespread belief," writes Arthur M. Schlesinger in *New Viewpoints in American History*, "even the people of the thirteen English colonies were a mixture of ethnic breeds. Indeed, these colonies formed the most cosmopolitan area in the world at that time. . . . A Colonial Dame or a Daughter of the American Revolution might conceivably have nothing but pure Hebrew or French or German blood in her veins." Among the various racial elements were the native Indians, the numerous Negro slaves, the Dutch in New York, the Swedes in New Jersey, Huguenots from France, Highland Scots, and the Scotch-Irish in all the colonies. There were also the French in the Mississippi Valley and the Spaniards in Florida and Texas, eventually to be incorporated in the new nation. In the nineteenth century a vast multitude of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe was still further to thin our English blood.

Even in 1775 American civilization was not to be described as purely English; still less is it to be so characterized today. As present-day Europeans view it, our civilization seems rather an extension to the New World of the civilization of western Europe; and it represents for many of them the chief hope that that civilization will survive, even on the continent where it had its beginnings centuries ago.

The American character is the product not only of our European inheritance but also of the New World environment. The immigrant coming to the new land found that if he was to survive he would have to adapt himself to a new and more primitive way of life. How he managed this is suggested by Frederick J. Turner in "The Significance of the Frontier in American History":

"Our early history is the study of European germs developing in an American environment. . . . The frontier is the line of most rapid and effective Americanization. The wilderness masters the colonist. It finds him a European in dress, industries, tools, modes of travel, and thought. It takes him from the railroad car and puts him in the birch canoe. It strips off the garments of civilization and arrays him in the hunting shirt and the moccasin. It puts him in the log cabin of the Cherokee and Iroquois and runs an Indian palisade around him. Before long he has gone to planting Indian corn and plowing with a sharp stick; he shouts the war cry and takes the scalp in orthodox Indian fashion. In short, at the frontier the environment is at first too strong for the man. He must accept the conditions which it furnishes, or perish, and so he fits himself into the Indian clearings and follows the Indian trails. Little by little he transforms the wilderness, but the outcome is not the old Europe, not simply the development of Germanic germs. . . . The fact is, that here is a new product that is American."

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The American character, Turner thought, owed to the frontier experience its striking characteristics: "That coarseness and strength combined with acuteness and inquisitiveness, that practical, inventive turn of mind, quick to find expedients; that masterful grasp of material things, lacking in the artistic but powerful to effect great ends; that restless, nervous energy; that dominant individualism, working for good and for evil, and withal that buoyancy and exuberance which comes with freedom—these are traits of the frontier, or traits called out elsewhere because of the existence of the frontier."

Significant changes were taking place in the American character. In 1724 the Reverend Hugh Jones, born and educated in England, published a book, *The Present State of Virginia*, in which he gave his impressions of his American students at the College of William and Mary:

"Thus they have good natural notions and will soon learn arts and sciences; but are generally diverted by business or inclination from profound study and prying into the depth of things; being ripe for management of their affairs before they have laid so good a foundation of learning, and had such instructions, and acquired such accomplishments as might be instilled into such good natural capacities. Nevertheless, through their quick apprehension they have a sufficiency of knowledge and fluency of tongue, though their learning for the most part be but superficial.

"They are more inclinable to read men by business and conversation than to dive into books, and are for the most part only desirous of learning what is absolutely necessary in the shortest and best method."

Here already we find the proverbial American practicality and resourcefulness. We find also that fondness for short cuts to knowledge and culture which has made so many Americans the prey of those who sell devices for learning to make money or acquire friends or culture in a few easy lessons.

The immigrants who came to America from Britain were not altogether representative of the English population. The selective process had already begun. In general, it was not the well-to-do, the conservative, the satisfied who came, but the poor, the restless, the adventurous, men desirous of change. (In later days men of the same types settled in the West.) The result is seen in an American willingness to try new expedients and in a lack of attachment to old ideas and ways of life. The great bulk of the settlers were from the middle and lower classes in England; there were few aristocrats or intellectuals. Our leaders in consequence came from the middle and lower orders of society. The common man found here opportunities which he would not have had if he had remained in the Old World.

Nevertheless, except along the border, life in America was democratic only in comparison with life in the Old World. Men brought with them British notions of class distinctions, and they did not readily give them up in Virginia or Massachusetts. The leaders in those two colonies were generally men of property, education, and good family. The great Virginian planters who all but ruled the colony were the sons not of common laborers or indentured servants but of country gentlemen, sea captains, army officers, and merchants who came with capital enough to buy land and set up plantations. In Massachusetts the Puritan leaders included well-to-do and educated country gentlemen like John Winthrop and ministers like John Cotton, who had been educated at Cambridge. They were not plain farm-

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ers or humble artisans like the men who settled at Plymouth. The Puritan leaders expected to be treated as gentlemen were treated in England. They had the English notion, too, that important offices in church and state should go to the gentry. In the course of time every colony developed an aristocracy of its own which consisted of men of property, education, and ability belonging to families which had established themselves as superior to the masses. In the South they were usually large-scale planters with many acres tilled by slaves or indentured servants. In New England they were often ministers, sea captains, or merchants. Along with these were the officials who clustered around the royal governor, whose influence was in the direction of keeping up English class distinctions. The Revolution was to displace such men and give a more democratic tone to social and political life.

The Southern planter, whatever his birth, sought as best he could to emulate the virtues and copy the way of life of the English country gentleman. The same ideal had its hold also upon New England merchants and ministers. The now colorless word *gentleman* in those days suggested not the idle parasite of Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class* but the Renaissance ideal of the well-rounded man. The American gentleman, whether or not he lived up to his code, never questioned the virtues which that code demanded of him: truth, honor, justice, liberality, courtesy, decorum, hospitality, and the spirit of public service. And even if his chief passion was fox hunting, he knew that literary culture was a desirable thing. The ideal was still strong in Revolutionary times, and there are no finer examples of gentlemen in the old sense than such Revolutionary leaders as Washington and Jefferson. The ideal continued in diminished form through the early nineteenth century. Irving, Emerson, Holmes, and Lowell are examples, and so was Fenimore Cooper, whose *The American Democrat* includes a notable plea for a place for the gentleman in American society. With the growth of the industrial revolution and the destruction of the Southern plantation system, the old ideal has become practically meaningless to the present generation.

Until a century or so ago, the arts and literature developed under the patronage of kings and noblemen. Only the well-to-do and the leisured cared greatly about good music, fine paintings, beautiful houses, or belles-lettres. Our literature, which in the nineteenth century made notable advances, has developed under the patronage of a rapidly widening reading public. It is nevertheless still an open question whether in a democracy artists can find in the public a patron comparable to Maecenas or Lorenzo de' Medici or earn a living without debasing their art by catering to low levels of taste.

II

In his Prologue to *The Earthly Paradise* William Morris suggested some of the things which the modern reader must forget if he is to understand the medieval life of Chaucer's time:

*"Forget six counties overhung with smoke,
Forget the snorting steam and piston stroke,
Forget the spreading of the hideous town;
Think rather of the pack-horse on the down,
And dream of London, small, and white, and clean. . . ."*

(Chaucer's London, incidentally, was neither white nor clean.) To understand how Ameri-

cans lived in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries one must mark the absence of many things which are now a part of our daily lives. One must forget the numerous products of the inventor and the manufacturer, for the industrial revolution had not yet come to America. There were no steam engines, no locomotives, no steamships. There were no gasoline engines, no automobiles, no airplanes. The use of electric power was as yet undreamed of; there were no telephones, no telegraph, no radio, no electric lights or power. Travel and communication were slow and expensive. Sailing ships took months rather than days to cross the Atlantic, and a voyage to England was a perilous experience which few cared to undertake. Roads were so poor that along the coast and on the larger rivers men frequently went by boat rather than on horseback or in wheeled vehicles. Farm products and imported goods were hauled to and from market in oxcarts or in wagons drawn by horses or mules. The postal system was still in its infancy even after Franklin undertook to reorganize it. Only the hardy ventured on such a journey as Sarah Kemble Knight took when she rode on horseback from Boston to New York in 1704. In the Northern colonies farmers expected every year to be snowbound, like the family described in Whittier's poem.

Some readers, if they were deprived of so many things that go to make the urban American comfortable, would feel that life was hardly worth living. But life reduced to its simplest terms, as many an ex-serviceman now knows from personal experience, is something to be valued. These things are its trappings, not its essence. Moreover, comforts and conveniences, when they are unknown, are not missed. Even on the frontier, where comforts were few, men still had their work, their wives and children, freedom from many restrictions known in more complicated societies, and the hope of better things to come.

As time passed, the level of prosperity and comfort increased, and in the towns and cities near the coast there developed something akin to the settled civilization of English towns. In the mid-eighteenth century Colonial culture reached its peak in such political and social capitals as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Annapolis, Williamsburg, and Charleston. These were now the home of well-to-do cultivated families who lived in handsome and well-furnished houses. They had gardens and private libraries, and they were able to see plays and to hear good music. Wealth and leisure had made it possible for them to cultivate a taste for literature and the fine arts. The cultural level among Boston ministers, Philadelphia merchants, Virginia tobacco planters, and South Carolina owners of rice plantations was comparatively high. Theirs was, however, a rather unproductive culture, for it was a provincial culture, imitative and derivative. Why, men felt, should they write novels or plays or poems or compose operas or symphonies when so much of the best that Europe had created was available in American cities? A different feeling developed after the Revolution had brought independence. Americans came to demand for themselves a national literature, an American culture.

Until the eighteenth century there was comparatively little intercourse among the various colonies. Before the Revolution each colony looked to England rather than to its sister colonies. In the long Colonial years each colony developed in its own way without much regard for what was happening in the others. When the Revolution came, it proved extremely difficult to induce the thirteen different provinces to unite effectively enough to wage a successful war. Nevertheless, economic and geographic influences tended roughly to

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group the colonies into sections which had much in common. Here we see the beginnings of that sectionalism which has been so marked a characteristic of our history.

In the Southern colonies the great majority of settlers were not Puritans but members of the Church of England; in Maryland there were many Roman Catholics. Soil and climate favored the establishment of large plantations, given over to tobacco, cotton, rice, and indigo and cultivated by the labor of indentured white servants or Negro slaves. Until the late seventeenth century most farms were small and the number of slaves was not large, for the planters preferred white workers and resorted to slaves only when other laborers could not be obtained. In the eighteenth century, however, the plantations grew larger and the slaves more numerous, for only large-scale farming seemed profitable in the tidewater regions; and many small farmers sold out and moved to the uplands. In the South, towns were few and the population was widely scattered, not clustered about churches and schools in villages, as in New England. In Virginia ships came up the James, the York, the Rappahannock, or the Potomac to the planter's wharf and took his hogsheads of tobacco directly to England, where his agent bought the tobacco and sent back to the planter whatever he had ordered. As a result Virginia had no cities and few representatives of the professional classes except ministers and lawyers, and most of the planters were heavily in debt to their English agents. In South Carolina, however, the rivers were too shallow for ocean-going ships; and Charleston, situated at the confluence of the Ashley and Cooper rivers, became a trading center of importance. Until after the Revolution it was one of the four or five largest American cities.

In New England, farming the niggardly and rocky soil was never highly profitable. What should be the rich tidewater belt of this region lies underneath the Atlantic Ocean. The thrifty and resourceful Yankees, however, made the most of their geographical advantages: good harbors, a plentiful supply of timber, water power, and nearness to the fishing grounds off the northeast coast; and they took to fishing, shipbuilding, and commerce, and in the nineteenth century to large-scale manufacturing. "The Yankee," writes Professor S. E. Morison, "was the American Scot. . . . A severe climate, a grudging soil that had to be cleared of boulders as well as trees, and a stern puritan faith dictated the four gospels of education, thrift, ingenuity, and righteousness." New Englanders early took to the sea. The sacred codfish was a symbol of Massachusetts prosperity. The influence of the sea modified the Yankee's provincialism and broadened his Puritan outlook. The sea offered young men a way of escape from the endless sermons of Puritan divines, and it brought them into contact with men of different races and with other religious beliefs. On the frontier, too, the Yankee character was modified by conditions very different from those prevailing in Boston and Providence. The influence of the ministry in New England, however, was greater than in any other section, even in matters of government. As late as 1837 we shall find Emerson referring to the clergy as "more universally than any other class, the scholars of their day." Massachusetts was the first colony to introduce a printing press, to launch a newspaper, and to found a college. Massachusetts was unconsciously laying a foundation for an important school of writers who were to appear in the second quarter of the nineteenth century.

The middle colonies were of diverse origins and for a long time had no unity of feeling. New York was for many years a Dutch colony, and Pennsylvania was founded as a refuge for Quakers. Life in these two colonies and in New Jersey and Delaware partook of some

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of the characteristics of both New England and the South. In time this section came nearer the American norm in its way of life and thought and even in its speech than any other except the region beyond the Alleghenies. In the eighteenth century Philadelphia was the largest of American cities and, certainly in Franklin's time, one of the most enlightened.

III

In trying to fathom the mind of the Colonial American, it is important to remember that no single aspect or partial approach gives one a real understanding of it. One must beware of current prejudices and provincial estimates. It is too easy to underrate the Puritans or the Quakers or the people of the slaveholding colonies. Nor can one understand fully the literature of Colonial America by fixing his attention exclusively upon cultural conditions. As Charles and Mary Beard wisely put it in *The Rise of American Civilization*: "By none of these methods apparently can the intimate essence of American culture be grasped. In reality the heritage, economics, politics, culture and international filiations of any civilization are so closely woven by fate into one fabric that no human eye can discern the beginnings of its warp or woof. And any economic interpretation, any political theory, any æsthetic appreciation, which ignores this perplexing fact, is of necessity superficial."

Too many Americans, including the youthful Walt Whitman, have felt that the civilization of the United States owes next to nothing to the Old World. No notion could be more mistaken. The pattern of living which the colonists established was as nearly English as the new environment would permit, and they brought with them an important English inheritance in their folkways, customs, manners, ideas of education and government, religious beliefs.

The Virginia and Massachusetts colonists brought with them English concepts of law and government. They put their faith in written charters and constitutions, and they cherished Magna Charta and the English Bill of Rights as well as their Colonial charters. They believed in the supremacy of the judiciary and the right of appeal. They claimed the right of local self-government, and they resented infringement upon their right to levy taxes. The earliest of the Colonial legislative bodies was the Virginia General Assembly, established in 1619. The right to vote was restricted to property holders and in some colonies to church members, but democratic processes were employed in town meetings and religious assemblies. Colonial officeholders, like William Byrd, contested strenuously with the royal governors for what they believed to be their rights. The regicide leader in Hawthorne's "The Gray Champion" is a vivid symbol of New England resistance to oppression. The Colonial leaders were familiar with the democratic ideas of John Milton and other Puritan thinkers, and they cherished the Whig liberalism of the Revolution of 1688 as expounded in John Locke's two treatises on government. When such liberal ideas went out of fashion in the England of George III, Americans still clung to them and embodied them in their appeals to King and Parliament and in their Declaration of Independence.

One must not, however, overrate the democratic tendencies in Colonial life. The great merchants, divines, planters, and government officials were often thoroughly undemocratic. The Boston clergyman, John Cotton, wrote in 1636: "Democracy, I do not conceyve that ever God did ordeyne as a fitt government eyther for church or commonwealth. If the people be governors, who shall be governed? As for monarchy, and aristocracy, they are both of

them clearly approved, and directed in scripture, yet so as referreth the soveraigntie to himselfe, and setteth up Theocracy in both, as the best forme of government in the commonwealth, as well as in the church." In 1717, however, a humbler New England minister, John Wise, defended democracy in both church and state as the best preventive of fraud and arbitrary rule. Of democracy he said: "This is a form of Government, which the Light of Nature does highly value, & often directs to as most agreeable to the Just and Natural Prerogatives of Humane Beings." In 1750 a third New England minister, Jonathan Mayhew, boldly contended, like Thoreau a century later, "That no civil rulers are to be obeyed when they enjoin things that are inconsistent with the commands of God: All such disobedience is lawful and glorious; particularly, if persons refuse to comply with any *legal establishment of religion*. . . ." As the passages quoted suggest, there was considerable growth in democratic thought between the first settlement and the outbreak of the Revolution.

The Reformation profoundly influenced American as well as English life and thought. Few Puritans came to the Southern colonies; but if we may judge by their laws and by the books in the planters' private libraries, the Virginians were quite as much concerned about religion as the New England Puritans and little more tolerant. In seventeenth-century England and America both the Puritans and their opponents were deeply concerned with religion and its implications for society and government. In America the percentage of dissenters was far greater than in England, and oppressed religious minorities came to this country from other European nations. Among them were the Quakers, the French Huguenots, Baptists, Roman Catholics, Moravians, and Scotch-Irish Presbyterians. Although the economic motive bulked very large in the minds of the immigrants, the desire to escape petty persecution was often an equally important incentive. The seventeenth century in Europe saw the beginning of many new religious sects, and the centrifugal process went on in this country. Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson were forced for their heretical opinions to take refuge in Rhode Island, for the Puritan clergy would not tolerate heresies which they had left England to get away from. If religious toleration came to be the general practice in the American colonies, it was partly because no one sect was numerous or powerful enough to make its own creed and ritual the law of the land. In *The Simple Cobler of Aggawam* (1647) Nathaniel Ward protested that he hated "Tolerations of divers Religions, or of one Religion in segregant shapes." Whoever endorsed toleration, he thought, was either an atheist, a heretic, or a hypocrite. "He that is willing to tolerate any Religion, or discrepant way of Religion, besides his owne, unlesse it be in matters meerly indifferent, either doubts of his owne, or is not sincere about it." To the modern mind, economic and political heresies seem far more dangerous than differences in religious belief; but in the seventeenth century, when union of church and state was all but universal, men feared to tolerate religious heresies for fear that the whole order of society might be overturned. The great American champion of religious toleration was Roger Williams, whose creed is thus admirably summarized by Charles and Mary Beard:

"In Williams' creed were four cardinal points. First was the doctrine that 'persecution for cause of conscience is most evidently and lamentably contrary to the doctrine of Christ Jesus.' From this simple declaration it followed that 'no one should be bound to worship or to maintain a worship against his own consent.' Williams' third principle was that church and state should be separated, that to limit the

choice of civil magistrates to church members was like choosing pilots and physicians according to their schemes of salvation rather than skill in their professions. Finally, the civil magistrate was not to interfere at all in matters of conscience; 'his power extends only to the bodies and goods of men.' "

Some understanding of the nature of Puritanism is essential if one would follow the development of American life and thought, but understanding Puritanism is no easy matter. The Puritan has become a legendary figure. "Time," wrote Emerson in his essay on "History," "dissipates to shining ether the solid angularity of facts. No anchor, no cable, no fences, avail to keep a fact a fact." With the Restoration of the Stuarts in 1660, Puritanism went out of fashion in England, and the Puritan became the butt of ridicule for such satirists as Samuel Butler, whose *Hudibras* gives a distorted picture. As late as 1826 Sir Walter Scott in *Woodstock* gave the traditional unfavorable picture of Cromwell and other Puritans. The year before, Macaulay in his essay on Milton had attempted to clear away some of the popular misconceptions. But not until Carlyle in 1845 published the letters and speeches of Cromwell was the great Puritan leader vindicated. We know now that among the Puritans were the chief liberal thinkers of the seventeenth century.

In New England the popular conception of the Puritan, although influenced by British notions, developed somewhat differently. The Puritans were the ancestors of later New Englanders, and so they were often magnified into greater men than they were. On the other hand, the Unitarian revolt against the theology of the Puritans led men to stress their less likable traits. Emerson, Holmes, and Parkman had little interest in the Puritans. Something of both attitudes is to be seen in Hawthorne's stories of Puritan New England. His picture, however, is too simple to be accurate. His Puritans are all of a type: stern, harsh, strong fanatics preoccupied with ferreting out secret sins. He plays up the stern John Endicott and ignores the gentler, more human William Bradford and John Winthrop. In the twentieth century, which is not much concerned with fine distinctions, the term *Puritanism* (or *puritanism*) has been widely employed as a synonym for narrowness and intolerance. It is necessary to remind ourselves that the Puritans were not a single type and that they were as human as other people. There were Puritans who loved good music, fine clothes, imported wines, and good poetry. They were a sturdy race and they left a deep imprint upon the character of their descendants. The Puritan movement found its loftiest expression in the poems of John Milton, *The Pilgrim's Progress* of John Bunyan, and in this country in the religious writings of Edward Taylor and Jonathan Edwards. The movement also left a heritage which has influenced the thought, behavior, and literary expression of Americans down into our own time.

The Puritan differed from the Anglican chiefly in his attitude toward the Bible. Both regarded it as the inspired word of God, but for the Puritan it was a complete code of laws to be implicitly obeyed. For the Anglican, the Bible was a guide which gave the broad principles of religion but did not lay down minute rules for guidance in matters of detail. The Anglican attached more importance to reason and the law of nature than did the Puritan. He considered the Puritan a narrow-minded literalist, much as the religious liberal of today views the Fundamentalist. The Puritans thought they had found in the Scriptures a perfect plan of church organization, and they proposed to put it into operation in New England when they could not secure its adoption in the mother country. But reformation in the or-

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ganization and ritual of the Church of England brought the Puritans into politics, for in a nation where there was union of church and state a religious question was also a political question. The Puritan desire for reform led Parliament into conflict not only with the Archbishop of Canterbury but with the King as well. The Puritans differed from the Anglicans on important points of doctrine. Their theology was indebted to that of John Calvin and his Scottish follower, John Knox. The Calvinist view of human nature has long been out of fashion, and yet it bears a resemblance to that held by economic determinists and psychologists of the twentieth century. Human nature no longer seems so wholly good as it seemed to Rousseau, Jefferson, Channing, and Emerson.

After the Restoration Puritanism went out of fashion in England and in all the colonies outside New England, where too often the leaders now stressed the letter rather than the spirit. Secular tendencies came more and more to dominate thinking and living in the New World as well as in the Old. Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana* is one long lament over the decay of godliness and the decline in influence of the ministry. Men were thinking more about this world than the next. The Puritan doctrine of special providences went out of style. The age of prose and reason and Deism had arrived.

Nevertheless, Puritanism was far from dead. Toward the middle of the eighteenth century something very like it was to be seen in the Methodist movement and in the Great Awakening in the colonies. Both John Wesley and George Whitefield crossed the Atlantic to preach their doctrines. About the same time Jonathan Edwards made a partly successful attempt to revive the Puritan theology. The movement made its strongest appeal in this country to dissenters, and it ultimately weaned away from the Anglican Church great numbers, especially in the upland regions farthest from the Atlantic.

IV

In the eighteenth century, which was the Age of Enlightenment, many persons in the educated classes were Deists. Although in their beliefs the Deists were not very unlike the Unitarians, they were not a church or an organized society, and they were to be found both inside and outside most denominations. In America many of the Revolutionary leaders, like Adams, Franklin, and Jefferson, were either Deists or in sympathy with the movement. Thomas Paine and Ethan Allen were militant Deists who vigorously attacked the beliefs of the orthodox and indulged in amateur higher criticism of the Bible.

Deism, like most other movements and ideas, is difficult to define with exactness, for it varied from decade to decade and from person to person, but its general nature is not difficult to grasp. It was in part a reaction against Puritanism, and on its intellectual side it owed much to discoveries of the scientists. As Emerson was later to phrase it, Copernicus had "destroyed the pagan fictions of the Church, by showing mankind that the earth on which we live was not the centre of the Universe . . . but a little scrap of a planet, rushing round the sun in our system, which in turn was too minute to be seen at the distance of many stars which we behold. Astronomy taught us our insignificance in nature; showed that our sacred as our profane history had been written in gross ignorance of the laws, which were far grander than we knew; and compelled a certain extension and uplifting of our views of the Deity and his Providence." The science of Sir Isaac Newton and the philosophy of John Locke glorified reason rather than intuition. Science had revealed a universe of unimaginable

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dimensions governed by immutable laws. The Deity, now seen as the Great First Cause, began to seem almost as remote from the little earth as the gods of Lucretius. The Deists glorified both reason and nature and looked askance at emotion and intuition. They found much truth in all the great religions, but the Bible was for them, as for Emerson, only one of the great religious scriptures. Unlike the Puritans, the Deists viewed the world with an attitude of rather shallow optimism, well expressed in Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man*. After the American Revolution Deism in this country quickly went out of fashion; it was always vigorously attacked by the evangelical denominations.

By 1765 our Colonial culture had reached its peak in such centers as Boston, Philadelphia, and Charleston. It was to be considerably disrupted by the Revolutionary War and the emigration of Tory families to England and Canada. It was a culture that existed primarily for the benefit of the leisured and the well-to-do. Not until after the Revolution was there any serious effort to raise the cultural level of the mass of the population. It was a culture closely modeled on that of England, and it was in consequence comparatively unproductive. The colonists imported what they wanted in the way of literature and the fine arts, but did little to encourage native artists and writers.

Interest in education was fairly widespread, but there was no general tax-supposed system of public schools, even in Massachusetts. In the grammar schools the chief emphasis was upon reading, writing, and arithmetic. The earliest colleges, Harvard, Yale, and William and Mary, were founded primarily to educate men for the ministry and other professions. There were no state universities or municipal colleges or colleges designed to train teachers for the lower schools. Education was generally regarded as the primary responsibility of the parents and not of the state. Few but the well-to-do were able to send their sons to college. The Southern colonies were slower to found colleges, but they sent a larger number of their young men to England to be educated. William Byrd, like his friend Benjamin Lynde, Chief Justice of Massachusetts, studied law at the Middle Temple in London. In the Colonial colleges mathematics and the ancient classics bulked large, but the training given young collegians was not ill adapted to future ministers, lawyers, and physicians or even to the sons of the great planters. The education which the Revolutionary statesmen received admirably fitted them for the part they had to play in the struggle for independence.

The number of newspapers founded in the eighteenth century suggests that the number of persons able to read was considerable. Owing partly to the difficulty of obtaining news, Colonial newspapers published more literary material than did their successors. The most important literary type represented is the familiar essay. Many of the essays printed in the newspapers were borrowed from the *Tatler*, the *Spectator*, and the many later English series of periodical essays, but a considerable number were written in the colonies. The popularity of Addison and Steele was immense, and Benjamin Franklin was not unique in his desire to learn to write like the author of whom Samuel Johnson said: "Whoever wishes to attain an English style familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison."

The first printing press in the English colonies was set up in Cambridge in 1639, three years after the founding of Harvard College. The Boston *News-Letter*, established in 1704, was the first newspaper to continue beyond a single issue. There were printing presses in New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland before 1700 and both printing presses and news-

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papers in all the colonies before 1775. A few magazines were established in Northern cities before the Revolution, but their literary importance is not great. The printer, it should be noted, was usually not only the editor and proprietor of a newspaper but also a book-seller and sometimes a postmaster as well. Since he frequently advertised his wares in his paper, we often find extensive lists of books imported from England which he expected to sell. These indicate that in the towns in which there were printers one could buy not only new books but ancient and modern classics as well.

Colonial Americans read much the same books as those which Englishmen were reading. There was naturally a slight lag in literary fashions, as there was in districts in England at a distance from London. Away from the American seaboard the lag was much greater, and books were much less plentiful than in Boston and Annapolis. Inventories of private libraries indicate that books were common in the homes of educated planters, ministers, lawyers, and merchants. Here are of course the ancient classics, now found frequently in translation, the Bible and other religious books, histories, law books, books of travel, plays, novels, poems, and bound volumes of essays. Apart from Shakespeare and a few other writers, English literature in 1750 is represented by such later writers as Dryden, Pope, the Restoration dramatists, Addison, Steele, Swift, Richardson, and Fielding. French literature is often found both in the original and in translation, but other modern literatures are very scantily represented. Among books common in libraries of all kinds are John Locke's two treatises on government, Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws*, and other books embodying the liberal political ideas of the Revolution of 1688. It is from such books as these that Adams, Jefferson, and the Virginia Lees derived their theories of government.

v

American literature, like that of Russia, is one of the youngest of the literatures of the world; and it is only one of several literatures written in the English language, including those of Eire, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. Our literature began as a very minor branch of English literature, and it was slow to take on American characteristics and become an expression of distinctively American life and thought. It is, consequently, difficult to say just when it ceased to be a branch of English literature and became a separate national literature. When Jamestown was founded, Elizabethan literature was at its peak; but, as Gamaliel Bradford once put it, "When the settlers came to this country, they brought English morals and religion, they left the Shakespearean imagination behind." They left behind them also the classes which were producing great literature. In the beginning our writers, few of whom had real talent, merely followed the literary fashions of the mother country, and too often they failed to choose the best British models. We shall find Anne Bradstreet imitating Joshua Sylvester rather than John Milton, and Cotton Mather modeling his prose not on that of John Dryden but on some of his clumsy and verbose predecessors. Only very slowly did Americans master the art of writing and learn to write with individuality and skill. In the eighteenth century, however, if not before, we find writing which seems genuinely American. It appears less often in formal literary expression than in such informal writing as Sarah Kemble Knight's account of her journey from Boston to New York in 1704. In a letter to V. F. Calverton, May 14, 1931, Gamaliel Bradford wrote:

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"It has always seemed to me that here lies the real American literature, in the letters, diaries, personal narratives, which record the real experience of the race from the beginning. This stream widens and deepens with growing power and significance, so that the great American literature of the eighteenth century is the correspondence of Washington, Franklin, the Adamses, and a dozen others. Following out this idea, I should show how the genuine Americanism creeps in through all the false literary artificiality, even in men like Longfellow and Holmes and Lowell, much more in Hawthorne and Cooper and Emerson. The stream of real Americanism is there."

Something American is evident in the work of our three most important early writers, William Byrd, Jonathan Edwards, and Benjamin Franklin, who are worthy to be set not far below the classic prose writers of eighteenth-century England.

The motive which induced the Colonial American to take his pen in hand was seldom the desire to write literature in any narrow sense of the word. The purpose was primarily utilitarian. What we find him writing is not novels, short stories, plays, or poems written for their own sake (although there was much verse) but sermons, histories, biographies, controversial pamphlets, diaries, letters, and travelers' accounts. Often there was no thought of publication, and much of the best Colonial writing was not published until after the Revolution, some of it not until the twentieth century. Among the finest Colonial writing, especially in the Southern colonies, were expressions of resentment at British misconceptions of American life. It was such a motive that induced Robert Beverley to write his *History of Virginia*. There was more writing and publishing in New England than in other sections. Much of it consists of sermons, which seem to have made up a large part of what New Englanders read. There are many fine examples of this obsolescent literary type, but few read them today. The modern reader finds metal more attractive in Sewall's diary and the metaphysical poems of Edward Taylor.

Our Colonial literature is, as we have noted, a minor part of English literature, and cannot of course be fully understood without some knowledge of its English background. Literary fashions were set in London and not in Boston and New York. The artificial prose of Captain John Smith or Nathaniel Ward is better understood if, for instance, one has read Sidney's *Arcadia* and Lyly's *Euphues*; and "Bacon's Epitaph" and the poems of Edward Taylor will seem excessively artificial to one who has read nothing by John Donne. With American writers, as with British, we note a marked change in prose style when we come to the eighteenth century. William Byrd and Benjamin Franklin have much in common with Addison, Steele, Defoe, and Swift. They also belong to the Age of Prose and Reason, the age of the essay and the novel, of Deism, and of Neo-Classicism.

There is a considerable body of literature dealing with America written by Englishmen and other Europeans, of which the cultivated American cannot afford to remain wholly ignorant. There is a bulky literature of exploration and a large mass of materials dealing with the American Indian. (See, for example, Hoxie N. Fairchild, *The Noble Savage*, 1928; Albert Keiser, *The Indian in American Literature*, 1933; and Gilbert Chinard, *L'Exotisme américain dans la littérature française au XVI siècle*, 1911, and its two successors.) In the

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Appendix to this volume we have included certain selections by English writers. These illustrate the various literary fashions which prevailed in the mother country. They are also important documents for the study of Anglo-American relations.

Finally, Colonial America has a literary importance of another sort which is seldom stressed. It is the historical background for a large amount of imaginative writing done in America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Some of this, naturally, is of greater merit than almost anything written by Americans in Colonial times. Among the better-known poems and novels we may single out Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and "The Maypole of Merry Mount"; Longfellow's *The Courtship of Miles Standish* and "A Ballad of the French Fleet"; Whittier's *Margaret Smith's Journal*; Simms's *The Yemassee*; and Irving's *Knickerbocker's History of New York*. Burton E. Stevenson's *Poems of American History* (1908) includes a considerable body of verse, written after Colonial times, which deals with historical events in the Colonial period. After the Revolution had made a nation of the thirteen colonies, our writers explored the Colonial past for picturesque figures and striking events that could be treated with the same glamour which Scott had thrown around English and Scottish history. Often of course the picture was highly idealized. The period of the settlement had already become a sort of golden age in the popular mind. It is interesting to compare the early New England settlers as they appear in the writings of William Bradford, Thomas Morton, Samuel Sewall, and Cotton Mather with the accounts given by Hawthorne, Longfellow, and Whittier.

JOHN SMITH

1580? - 1631

The life of this Lincolnshire yeoman's son recalls the wandering knights of the age of chivalry who set out in search of adventure trusting in their personal prowess. In the last and least credible of his books—*The True Travels, Adventures, and Observations of Captain John Smith* (1630)—he tells the story of his experiences in the Balkans fighting against the Turks. He was captured several times but always managed to escape either through his own ingenuity or with the help of some lady who took pity on him. He came to Virginia with the first group of settlers. Although he quarreled with a number of his companions, he proved himself an excellent soldier, a good explorer and map maker, and the ablest of the immigrants to deal with the Indians. Returning to England after two years, he never came back to Virginia, but nevertheless maintained a keen interest in American affairs. He was the first Englishman to explore the coast of Massachusetts, and it was he who gave it that name. S. E. Morison has said: "For his pioneer work, sound advice, and hearty support of the Pilgrim colony, John Smith should rightly be regarded as the founder of maritime Massachusetts." While he was still in Virginia, he wrote a pamphlet—*A True Relation of Occurrences and Accidents in Virginia* (London, 1608)—in which he described his captivity among the Indians but made no mention of the famous rescue by Pocahontas. In 1624 he published *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles*, from which our selections are taken. The best edition of his *Works* is that of Edward Arber (1895), revised by A. G. Bradley in 1910. Two of the best discussions of Smith's writings are Howard Mumford Jones, *The Literature of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century* (1946), and J. M. Morse, "John Smith and His Critics: A Chapter in Colonial Historiography," *Journal of Southern History*, I, 123-137 (May, 1935).

Smith's style, particularly in the Dedication given below, shows the influence of the fashion which began with John Lyly's *Euphues* in 1579 and which became known as Euphuism. Among its characteristics are an excessive fondness for antithesis, balance, and alliteration and a tendency to use farfetched figures or "conceits." Smith, however, is a good raconteur when he has an interesting story to tell.

Historians have long had their doubts about the story of Pocahontas' rescue of Smith from the clubs of Indian executioners; but that story is none the less one of our few notable literary legends, and it has been treated in a large number of poems, plays, and novels. One of the best of the Pocahontas poems—Vachel Lindsay's "Our Mother Pocahontas"—is given in Volume II of this anthology.

from THE GENERALL HISTORIE OF
VIRGINIA, NEW ENGLAND AND
THE SUMMER ISLES (1624)

[Dedication]

TO THE ILLVSTRIOVS AND MOST NOBLE PRIN-
CESSE, the Lady FRANCIS, Duchess of RICHMOND
and LENOX

May it please your Grace,

This History, as for the raritie and varietie
of the subiect, so much more for the judicious
Eyes it is like to vndergoe, and most of all for
that great *Name*, whercof it dareth implore Pro-
tection, might and ought to haue beene clad in
better robes then my rude military hand can cut
out in Paper Ornaments. But because, of the
most things therein, I am no Compiler by hear-
say, but haue beene a reall Actor; I take my
selfe to haue a proprietie in them. and therefore
haue beene bold to challenge them to come
vnder the reach of my owne rough Pen. That,
which hath beene indured and passed through
with hardship and danger, is thereby sweetned
to the *Actor*, when he becometh the *Relator*. I
haue deeply hazarded my selfe in doing and
suffering, and why should I sticke to hazard my
reputation in Recording? He that acteth two
parts is the more borne withall if he come
short, or fayle in one of them. Where shall we
looke to finde a *Iulius Cæsar*, whose atchieu-
[e]ments shine as cleare in his owne Commem-
taries, as they did in the field? I confesse, my
hand, though able to wield a weapon among
the Barbarous, yet well may tremble in han-
dling a Pen among so many *Iudicious*: es-
pecially when I am so bold as to call so piercing,
and so glorious an *Eye*, as your *Grace*, to view
these poore ragged lines.

Yet my comfort is, that heretofore honorable
and vertuous *Ladies*, and comparable but
amongst themselves, haue offred me rescue and
protection in my greatest dangers: even in for-
raine parts, I haue felt reliefe from that sex.
The beauteous Lady *Tragabigzanda*, when I
was a slaue to the *Turkes*, did all she could to
secure me. When I overcame the *Bashaw* of
Nalbrits in *Tartaria*, the charitable Lady *Calla-
mata* supplied my necessities. In the vtmost of
many extremities, that blessed *Pokahontas*, the
great Kings daughter of *Virginia*, oft saved my

life When I escaped the crueltie of Pirats and
most furious stormes, a long time alone in a
small Boat at Sea, and driven ashore in *France*,
the good Lady *Madam Chanoyes*, bountifully
5 assisted me.

And so verily these my adventures haue tasted
the same *influence* from your *Gratious hand*,
which hath given birth to the publication of
this *Narration*. If therefore your *Grace* shall
10 daigne to cast your eye on this poore Booke,
view I pray you rather your owne *Bountie*
(without which it had dyed in the wombe)
then [than] my *imperfections*, which haue no
helpe but the shrine of your *glorious Name* to
15 be sheltered from censorious condemnation.
Vouchsafe some glimpse of your honorable
aspect, to accept these my labours, to protect
them vnder the shadow of your excellent *Name*:
which will inable them to be presented to the
20 *Kings royall Maestie*, the most admired Prince
Charles, and the *Queene of Bohemia*: your
sweet Recommendations will make it the
worthier of their good countenances. And as all
my endeavours are their due tribute: so this
25 Page shall record to posteritie, that my service
shall be to pray to *God*, that you may still con-
tinue the renowned of your sexe, the most hon-
ored of men, and the highly blessed of *God*.

Your Graces faithfull

and devoted servant,

JOHN SMITH.

[A Letter to the Queen]

- - - During this time, the Lady *Rebecca*, alias
Pocahontas, daughter to *Powhatan*, by the dili-
gent care of Master *Iohn Rolfe* her husband
and his friends, [w]as taught to speake such
English as might well bee vnderstood, well in-
40 structed in Christianitie, and was become very
formall and ciuill after our *English* manner;
shee had also by him a childe which she loued
most dearly, and the Treasurer and Company
tooke order both for the maintenance of her
45 and it, besides there were diuers persons of
great ranke and qualitie had beene very kinde
to her; and before she arriued at London, Cap-
taine *Smith* to deserue her former courtesies,
made her qualities knowne to the *Queenes* most
50 excellent *Maestie* and her Court, and writ a
little booke to this effect to the *Queene*: an ab-
stract whereof followeth.

To the most high and vertuous Princesse,
Queene Anne of Great Brittainie [sic]

[1616]

Most admired Queene,

The loue I beare to my God, my King and
 Countrie, hath so oft emboldened mee in the
 worst of extreme dangers, that now honestie
 doth constraîne mee [to] presume thus farre
 beyond my selfe, to present to your Maestie
 this short discourse: if ingratitude be a deadly
 poyson to all honest vertues, I must bee guiltie
 of that crime if I should omit any meanes to bee
 thankfull. So it is,

That some ten yeeres agoe being in *Virginia*,
 and taken prisoner by the power of *Pow-*
hatan their chiefe King, I receiued from this
 great Saluage exceeding great courtesie, espe-
 cially from his sonne *Nantaquaus*, the
 most manliest, comeliest, boldest spirit, I euer
 saw in a Saluage, and his sister *Pocahontas*,
 the Kings most deare and wel-beloued daugh-
 ter, being but a childe of twelue or thirteene
 yeeres of age, whose compassionate pitifull
 heart, of my desperate estate, gaue me much
 cause to respect her: I being the first Chris-
 tian this proud King and his grim attendants
 euer saw: and thus intrhalled in their bar-
 barous power, I cannot say I felt the least
 occasion of want that was in the power of
 those my mortall foes to preuent,¹ notwith-
 standing al their threats. After some six weeks
 fattig amongst those Saluage Courtiers, at
 the minute of my execution, she hazarded the
 beating out of her owne braines to saue mine;
 and not onely that, but so preuaild with her
 father, that I was safely conducted to *Iames*
 towne: where I found about eight and thirtie
 miserable poore and sicke creatures, to keepe
 possession of all those large territories of *Vir-*
ginia; such was the weaknesse of this poore
 Commonwealth, as had the Saluages not fed
 vs we directly had starued. And this reliefe,
 most gracious Queene, was commonly brought
 vs by this Lady *Pocahontas*.

Not withstanding all these passages, when
 inconstant Fortune turned our peace to
 warre, this tender Virgin would still not spare
 to dare to visit vs, and by her our iarres haue
 beene oft appeased, and our wants still sup-
 plied; were it the policie of her father thus to

¹ Anticipate.

imploy her, or the ordinance of God thus to
 make her his instrument, or her extra-
 ordinarie affection to our Nation, I know not:
 but of this I am sure; when her father with
 the vtmost of his policie and power, sought
 to surprize mee, hauing but eighteene with
 mee, the darke night could not affright her
 from coming through the irkesome woods, and
 with watered eies, gaue me intelligence, with
 her best aduice to escape his furie; which had
 hee knowne, hee had surely slaine her.

Iames towne with her wild traine she as
 freely frequented, as her fathers habitation;
 and during the time of two or three yeeres,
 she next vnder God, was still the instrument
 to preserue this Colonie from death, famine
 and vtter confusion; which if in those times,
 [it] had once beene dissolved, *Virginia*
 might haue line [lain] as it was at our first
 arriuall to this day.

Since then, this businesse hauing beene
 turned and varied by many accidents from
 that I left it at: it is most certaine, after a
 long and troublesome warre after my de-
 parture, betwixt her father and our Colonie;
 all which time shee was not heard of.

About two yeeres after shee her selfe was
 taken prisoner, being so detained neere two
 yeeres longer, the Colonie by that meanes
 was relieued, peace concluded; and at last
 reiecting her barbarous condition, she [was]
 married to an *English* Gentleman, with whom
 at this present she is in *England*; the first
 Christian euer of that Nation, the first *Vir-*
ginian euer spake *English*, or had a childe in
 mariage by an *Englishman*: a matter surely,
 if my meaning bee truly considered and well
 vnderstood, worthy a Princes vnderstanding.

Thus, most gracious Lady, I haue related to
 your Maiestie, what at your best leasure our
 approued Histories will account to you at large,
 and done in the time of your Maiesties life;
 and howeuer this might bec presented you from
 a more worthy pen, it cannot from a more
 honest heart, as yet I neuer begged any thing
 of the state, or any: and it is my want of abilitie
 and her exceeding desert; your birth, meanes
 and authoritie; her birth, vertue, want and sim-
 plicitie, doth make mee thus bold, humbly to
 beseech your Maiestie to take this knowledge of
 her, though it be from one so vnworthy to be

the reporter, as my selfe, her husbands estate not being able to make her fit to attend your Maiestie. The most and least I can doe, is to tell you this, because none so oft hath tried it as my selfe, and the rather being of so great a spirit, how euer her stature: if she should not be well receiued, seeing this Kingdome may rightly haue a Kingdome by her means; her present loue to vs and Christianitie might turne to such scorne and furie, as to diuert all this good to the worst of euill: where[as] finding so great a Queene should doe her some honour more than she can imagine, for being so kinde to your seruants an[d] subiects, would so rauish her with content, as endeare her dearest blood to effect that, your Maiestie and all the Kings honest subjects more earnestly desire

And so I humbly kisse your gracious hands.

[Captured by Indians]²

At last they brought him to *Meronocomoco*, where was *Powhatan* their Emperor. Here more then two hundred of those grim Courtiers stood wondering at him, as he had beene a monster; till *Powhatan* and his trayne had put themselves in their greatest braveries. Before a fire upon a seat like a bedsted, he sat covered with a great robe, made of *Rarowcun*³ skinnies, and all the tayles hanging by. On either hand did sit a young wench of 16 or 18 yeares, and along on each side of the house, two rowes of men, and behind them as many women, with all their heads and shoulders painted red: many of their heads bedecked with the white downe of Birds, but every one with something: and a great chayne of white beads about their necks.

At his entrance before the King, all the people gave a great shout. The Queene of *Appamatuck* was appointed to bring him water to wash his hands, and another brought him a bunch of feathers, in stead of a Towell to dry them: having feasted him after their best barbarous manner they could, a long consultation was held, but the conclusion was, two great stones were brought before *Powhatan*: then as many as could layd hands on him, dragged him to them, and thereon laid his head, and being ready with their clubs, to beate out his braines, *Pocahontas* the Kings dearest daughter, when no intreaty

could preuaile, got his head in her armes, and laid her owne upon his to save him from death: whereat the Emperour was contented he should live to make him hatchets, and her bells, beads, and copper; for they thought him as well of all occupations as themselves. For the King himselfe will make his owne robes, shooes, bowes, arrowes, pots, plant, hunt, or doe any thing so well as the rest.

*They say he bore a pleasant shew,
But sure his heart was sad.
For who can pleasant be, and rest,
That lives in feare and dread
And having life suspected, doth
It still suspected lead*

Two days after, *Powhatan* having disguised himselfe in the most tearefullest manner he could, caused Captain *Smith* to be brought forth to a great house in the woods, and there upon a mat by the fire to be left alone. Not long after from behinde a mat that divided the house, was made the most dolefullest noyse he ever heard; then *Powhatan* more like a devill then a man, with some two hundred more as blacke as himselfe, came unto him and told him now they were friends, and presently he should goe to *Iames* towne, to send him two great gunnes, and a gryndstone, for which he would give him the Country of *Capahowosich*, and for ever esteeme him as his sonne *Nantaquoud*.

So to *Iames* towne with 12 guides *Powhatan* sent him. That night they quarterd in the woods, he still expecting (as he had done all this long time of his imprisonment) every houre to be put to one death or other: for all their feasting. But almightie God (by his divine providence) had mollified the hearts of those sterne *Barbarians* with compassion. The next morning betimes they came to the Fort, where *Smith* having used the Salvages for what kinnesse he could, he shewed *Rawhunt*, *Powhatans* trusty servant, two demi-Culverings and a millstone to carry *Powhatan*: they found them somewhat too heauey; but when they did see him discharge them, being loaded with stones, among the boughs of a great tree loaded with Isickles, the yce and branches came so tumbling downe, that the poore Salvages ran away halfe dead with feare. But at last we regained some conference with them, and gave them such toyes; and sent to *Powhatan*, his women, and children such presents, as gave them in general full content.

² In this selection Smith's use of the letters *u* and *v* has been made to conform to modern usage.

³ Raccoon.

WILLIAM BRADFORD

1590? - 1657

Bradford was born in Austerfield in Yorkshire. Becoming a Separatist, he migrated to Holland. He came to New England with the other Pilgrims in 1620. On the death of Governor Carver, Bradford was chosen to succeed him and held the post, with brief intermissions, until his death. His history of the Plymouth Colony covers the years 1620-1647. During the Revolution the manuscript disappeared. It was later discovered in the library of the Bishop of London. It was published in 1856 by the Massachusetts Historical Society. See Cotton Mather's brief life of Bradford, given in I, p. 49; A. H. Plumb, *William Bradford of Plymouth* (1920); and E. F. Bradford, "Conscious Art in Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation," *New England Quarterly*, I, 133-157 (April, 1928).

from OF PLIMOTH PLANTATION (1630-1650; 1856)

[The Landing]

- - - In all this viage ther died but one of the passengers, which was William Batten, a youth, servant to Samuell Fuller, when they drew near the coast. But to omite other things, (that I may be breefe,) after longe beating at sea they fell with that land which is called Cape Cod; the which being made and certainly knowne to be it, they were not a litle joyfull. After some deliberation had amongst them selves and with the master of the ship, they tacked aboute and resolved to stande for the southward (the wind and weather being faire) to finde some place aboute Hudsons river for their habitation. But after they had sailed that course aboute halfe the day, they fell amongst deangerous shoulds¹ and roring breakers, and they were so farr in-

tangled ther with as they conceived them selves in great danger; and the wind shrinking upon them withall, they resolved to bear up againe for the Cape, and thought them selves hapy to gett out of those dangers before night overtooke them, as by Gods providence they did. And the next day they gott into the Cape-harbor wher they ridd in saftie. A word or too by the way of this cape; it was thus first named by Capten Gosnole and his company, Anno: 1602, and after by Capten [John] Smith was caled Cape James; but it retains the former name amongst seamen. Also that pointe which first shewed those dangerous shoulds unto them, they called Pointe Care, and Tuckers Terrour; but the French and Dutch to this day call it Malabarr, by reason of those perilous shoulds, and the losses they have suffered their.

Being thus arived in a good harbor and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees and blessed the God of heaven, who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean, and delivered them from all the periles and miseries

¹ Shoals.

thereof, againe to set their feete on the firme and stable earth, their proper elemente. And no marvell if they were thus joyefull, seeing wise Seneca was so affected with sailing a few miles on the coast of his owne Italy; as he affirmed, that he had rather remaine twentie years on his way by land, then pass by sea to any place in a short time; so tedious and dreadful was the same unto him.

But hear I cannot but stay and make a pause, and stand half amased at this poore peoples presente condition, and so I thinke will the reader too, when he well considers the same. Being thus passed the vast ocean, and a sea of troubles before in their preparation (as may be remembred by that which wente before), they had now no friends to wellcome them, nor inns to entertaine or refresh their weather-beaten bodys, no houses or much less townes to repaire too, to seeke for succoure It is recorded in scripture as a mercie to the apostle and his shipwrecked company, that the barbarians shewed them no smale kindnes in refreshing them, but these savage barbarians, when they mette with them (as after will appeare) were readier to fill their sides full of arrows then otherwise. And for the season it was winter, and they that know the winters of that cuntrie know them to be sharp and violent, and subjecte to cruell and feirce stormes, deangerous to travill to known places, much more to serch an unknown coast. Besids, what could they see but a hidious and desolate wilddernes, full of wild beasts and wildd men? and what multitudes ther might be of them they knew not. Neither could they, as it were, goe up to the tope of Pisgah, to vew from this wilddernes a more goodly cuntrie to feed their hops; for which way soever they turnd their eys (save upward to the heavens) they could have litle solace or content in respecte of any outward objects. For summer being done, all things stand upon them with a wetherbeaten face; and the whole cuntrie, full of woods and thickets, represented a wild and savage heiw. If they looked behind them, ther was the mighty ocean which they had passed, and was now as a maine barr and goulfe to separate them from all the civill parts of the world. If it be said they had a ship to sucour them, it is trew; but what heard they daly from the master and company? but that with speede they should looke out a place

with their shallop, wher they would be at some near distance; for the season was shuch as he would not stirr from thence till a safe harbor was discovered by them wher they would be, and he might goe without danger; and that victells consumed apace, but he must and would keepe sufficient for them selves and their returne. Yea, it was muttered by some, that if they gott not a place in time, they would turne them and their goods ashore and leave them. Let it also be considred what weake hopes of supply and succoure they left behinde them, that might bear up their minds in this sade condition and trialls they were under; and they could not but be very smale. It is true, indeed, the affections and love of their brethren at Leyden was cordiall and enture towards them, but they had litle power to help them, or them selves; and how the case stode betweene them and the marchants at their coming away, hath already been declared. What could now sustaine them but the spirite of God and his grace? May not and ought not the children of these fathers rightly say: *Our fauthers were Englishmen which came over this great ocean, and were ready to perish in this wilddernes; but they cried unto the Lord, and he heard their voyce, and looked on their adversitie, etc. Let them therfore praise the Lord, because he is good, and his mercies endure for ever. Yea, let them which have been redeemed of the Lord, shew how he hath delivered them from the hand of the oppressour. When they wandered in the deserte wilddernes out of the way, and found no citie to dwell in, both hungrie, and thirstie, their sowle was overwhelmed in them. Let them confess before the Lord his loving kindnes, and his wonderfull works before the sons of men.*

[Merry Mount]

Aboute some 3. or 4. years before this time,² ther came over one Captaine Wolastone, (a man of pretie parts,) and with him 3. or 4. more of some eminencie, who brought with them a great many servants,³ with provisions & other implements for to begine a plantation; and pitched them selves in a place within the Massachusets, which they called, after their Captains name, Mount-Wollaston. Amongst whom was one Mr.

² 1628.

³ Indentured servants.

Morton, who, it should seeme, had some small adventure (of his owne or other mens) amongst them; but had litle respecte amongst them, and was sleighted by the meanest servants Having continued ther some time, and not finding things to answer their expectations, nor profite to arise as they looked for, Captaine Wollaston takes a great part of the sarvents, and transports them to Virginia, wher he puts them of at good rates, selling their time to other men; and writs back to one Mr. Rassdall, one of his cheefe partners, and accounted their marchant, to bring another parte of them to Verginia likewise, intending to put them of ther as he had done the rest. And he, with the consente of the said Rasdall, appoynted one Fitcher to be his Livetenante, and governe the remaines of the plantation, till he or Rasdall returned to take further order ther-about. But this Morton abovesaid, havcing more craft then honestie (who had been a kind of petiefogger, of Furnells Innc,) in the others absence, watches an oppertunitie, (commons being but hard amongst them,) and gott some strong drinck and other junkats, & made them a feast; and after they were merie, he begane to tell them, he would give them good counsell. You see (saith he) that many of your fellows are carried to Virginia; and if you stay till this Rasdall returne, you will also be carried away and sould for slaves with the rest. Therfore I would advise you to thrust out this Levetenant Fitcher; and I, having a parte in the plantation, will receive you as my partners and consociats; so may you be free from service, and we will converse, trad, plante, & live together as equalls, & supporte & protecte one another, or to like effecte. This counsell was easily received; so they tooke oppertunities, and thrust Levetenante Fitcher out a dores, and would suffer him to come no more amongst them, but forct him to seeke bread to eate, and other releefe from his neighbours, till he could gett passages for England. After this they fell to great licenciousness, and led a dissolute life, powering out them selves into all profanenes. And Morton became lord of misrule, and maintained (as it were) a schoole of Athisme. And after they had gott some good into their hands, and gott much by trading with the Indeans, they spent it as vainly, in quaffing & drinking both wine & strong waters in great exsess, and, as some reported 10 £. forth in a morning. They also set up a May-pole, drinking

and dancing aboute it many days together, inviting the Indean women, for their consorts, dancing and frisking together, (like so many faires, or furies rather,) and worse practises As if they had anew revived & celebrated the feasts of the Roman Goddes Flora, or the beasly practises of the madd Bacchinalians. Morton likewise (to shew his poetrie) composed sundry rimes & verses, some tending to lasciviousnes, and others to the detraction & scandall of some persons, which he affixed to this idle or idoll May-polle. They chainged also the name of their place, and in stead of calling it Mounte Wollaston, they called it Merie-mounte, as if this joylity would have lasted ever. But this continued not long, for after Morton was sent for England, (as follows to be declared,) shortly after came over that worthy gentelman, Mr. John Indecott, who brought over a patent under the broad seall, for the govermente of the Massachusetts, who visiting those parts caused that May-polle to be cutt downe, and rebuked them for their profannes, and admonished them to looke ther should be better walking; so they now, or others, changed the name of their place againe, and called it Mounte-Dagon.

Now to maintaine this riotous prodigallitie and profuse excess, Morton, thinking him selfe lawless, and hearing what gaine the French & fisher-men made by trading of peeeces, powder, & shotte to the Indeans, he, as the head of this consortship, begane the practise of the same in these parts; and first he taught them how to use them, to charge, & discharg, and what proportion of powder to give the peece, according to the sise or bignes of the same; and what shotte to use for foule, and what for deare. And having thus instructed them, he employed some of them to hunte & fowle for him, so as they became farr more active in that imploymente then any of the English, by reason of ther swiftnes of foote, & nimblnes of body, being also quick-sighted, and by continuall exercise well knowing the hants of all sorts of game. So as when they saw the execution that a peece would doe, and the benefite that might come by the same, they became madd, as it were, after them, and would not stick to give any prise they could attaine too for them; accounting their bowes & arrows but bables in comparison of them.

And here I may take occasion to bewaile the mischefe that this wicked man began in these

parts, and which since base covetousnes prevailing in men that should know better, has now at length gott the upper hand, and made this thing commone, notwithstanding any laws to the contrary; so as the Indeans are full of peeces all over, both fouling peeces, muskets, pistols, &c. They have also their moulds to make shotte, of all sorts, as muskett bulletts, pistoll bullets, swane & gose shote, & of smaler sorts; yea, some have seen them have their scruplats to make scrupins⁴ them selves, when they wante them, with sundery other implements, wherwith they are ordinarily better fited & furnished then the English them selves. Yea, it is well knowne that they will have powder & shot, when the English want it, nor cannot gett it; and that in time of warre or danger, as experience hath manifested, that when lead hath been scarce, and men for their owne defence would gladly have given a groat a li, which is dear enoughe, yet hath it bene bought up & sent to other places, and should to shuch as trade it with the Indeans, at 12. pence the li.; and it is like they give 3. or 4. s. the pound, for they will have it at any rate. And these things have been done in the same times, when some of their neighbours & friends are daly killed by the Indeans, or are in deanger therof, and live but at the Indeans mercie. Yea, some (as they have acquainted them with all other things) have tould them how gunpowder is made, and all the materials in it, and that they are to be had in their owne land; and I am confidente, could they attaine to make saltpeter, they would teach them to make powder. O, the horiblnes of this vilanie! how many both Dutch & English have been latly slaine by those Indeans, thus furnished; and no remedie provided, nay, the evill more increased, and the blood of their brethren sould for gaine, as is to be feared; and in what danger all these colonies are in is too well known. Oh! that princes & parlements would take some timly order to prevente this mischeefe, and at length to suppress it, by some exemplerie punishmente upon some of these gaine thirstie murderers, (for they deserve no better title.) before their collonies in these parts be over throwne by these barbarous savages, thus armed with their owne weapons, by these evill instruments, and traytors to their neighbors and cuntrie. But I have for-

gott my selfe, and have been to longe in this digression; but now to returne. This Morton having thus taught them the use of peeces, he sould them all he could spare; and he and his consorts deturmined to send for many out of England, and had by some of the ships sente for above a score. The which being knowne, and his neighbours meeting the Indeans in the woods armed with guns in this sorte, it was a terrour unto them, who lived straglingly, and were of no strength in any place And other places (though more remote) saw this mischeefe would quickly spread over all if not prevented. Besides, they saw they should keep no servants, for Morton would entertaine any, how vile soever, and all the scume of the countrie, or any discontents, would flock to him from all places, if this nest was not broken, and they should stand in more fear of their lives & goods (in short time) from this wicked & deboste⁵ crue, then from the salvages themselves.

So sundrie of the cheefe of the stragling plantations, meeting together, agreed by mutuall consente to sollissite those of Plimoth (who were then of more strength then them all) to joyne with them, to prevente the further growth of this mischeefe, and suppress Morton & his consortes before they grewe to further head and strength. Those that joyned in this acction (and after contributed to the charge of sending him for England) were from Pascataway, Namkeake, Wini-simett, Weesagascusett, Natasco, and other places wher any English were seated. Those of Plimoth being thus sought too by their messengers & letters, and waying both their reasons, and the commone danger, were willing to afford them their help; though them selves had least cause of fear or hurte. So, to be short, they first resolved joyntly to write to him, and in a friendly & neighborly way to admonish him to forbear these courses, & sent a messenger with their letters to bring his answer. But he was so highe as he scorned all advise, and asked who had to doe with him; he had and would trade peeces with the Indeans in despite of all, with many other scurilous termes full of disdaine. They sente to him a second time, and bad him be better advised, and more temperate in his termes, for the countrie could not beare the injure he did; it was against their comone saftie, and against the

⁴ Screw-plates to make screw-pins.

⁵ Debauched.

king's proclamation He answered in high terms as before, and that the kings proclamation was no law; demanding what penaltie was upon it. It was answered, more then he could bear, his majesties displeasure But insolently he persisted, and said the king was dead and his displeasure with him, & many the like things; and threatened withall that if any came to molest him, let them looke to them selves, for he would prepare for them. Upon which they saw ther was no way but to take him by force; and having so farr proceeded, now to give over would make him farr more hautie & insolente So they mutually resolved to proceed, and obtained of the Govr. of Plimoth to send Captaine Standish, & some other aide with him, to take Morton by force. The which accordingly was done; but they found him to stand stifly in his defence, having made fast his dors, armed his consorts, set diverse dishes of powder & bullets ready on the table; and if they had not been over armed with drinke, more hurt might have been done. They sommaned him to yeeld, but he kept his house, and they could gett nothing but scofes & scorns from him, but at length, fearing they would doe some violence to the house, he and some of his crue came out, but not to yeeld, but to shoote; but

they were so steeld with drinke as their peeces were to heavie for them, him selfe with a carbine (over charged & allmost halfe fild with powder & shote, as was after found) had thought to have shot Captaine Standish, but he stept to him, & put by his peece, & tooke him. Neither was ther any hurte done to any of either side, save that one was so drunke that he rane his owne nose upon the pointe of a sword that one held before him as he entred the house; but he lost but a litle of his hott blood. Morton they brought away to Plimoth, wher he was kepte, till a ship went from the Ile of Shols for England, with which he was sente to the Counsell of New-England, and letters writen to give them information of his course & cariage; and also one was sent at their com-mone charge to informe their Honours more perticularly, & to prosecute against him. But he foold of the messenger, alter he was gone from hence, and though he wente for England, yet nothing was done to him, not so much as rebukte, for ought was heard; but returned the nexte year Some of the worst of the company were disperst, and some of the more modest kepte the house till he should be heard from. But I have been too long aboute so unworthy a person, and bad a cause.

JOHN WINTHROP

1588-1649

John Winthrop was born at Edwardston in the County of Suffolk in England. He was educated at the University of Cambridge. In 1618 he married his third wife, Margaret, daughter of Sir John Tyndall. In 1630 he came to New England as governor of the Puritan colonists at Salem, Charlestown, and Boston. He was Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony for about twelve years. His *History of New England from 1630 to 1649* is an invaluable sourcebook. Among the more notable passages is the speech on the nature of liberty which he delivered at the General Court of Boston in 1645 after being acquitted of charges which practically amounted to his impeachment as Governor. His conception of liberty, as with most of his contemporaries, was not that of Thomas Jefferson or Andrew Jackson. The letters are taken

from Robert C. Winthrop, *Life and Letters of John Winthrop* (1863, 1895). They reveal a character thoroughly noble and sincere but a little austere. He was one of the best representatives of the Puritan type on either side of the Atlantic. There is a good brief account of Winthrop in S. E. Morison, *Builders of the Bay Colony* (1930).

LETTERS

TO HIS WIFE

To Mrs. Marg. Winthrop, the elder, at Groton.

[1630]

MY FAITHFUL AND DEAR WIFE,—It pleaseth God, that thou shouldst once again hear from me before our departure, and I hope this shall come safe to thy hands. I know it will be a great refreshing to thee. And blessed be his mercy, that I can write thee so good news, that we are all in very good health, and, having tried our ship's entertainment now more than a week, we find it agree very well with us. Our boys are well and cheerful, and have no mind of home. They lie both with me, and sleep as soundly in a rug (for we use no sheets here) as ever they did at Groton; and so I do myself, (I praise God). The wind hath been against us this week and more; but this day it is come fair to the north, so as we are preparing (by God's assistance) to set sail in the morning. We have only four ships ready, and some two or three Hollanders go along with us. The rest of our ships (being seven ships) will not be ready this sen-
 night. We have spent now two Sabbaths on shipboard very comfortably, (God be praised,) and are daily more and more encouraged to look for the Lord's presence to go along with us. Henry Kingsbury hath a child or two in the Talbot sick of the measles, but like to do well. One of my men had them at Hampton, but he was soon well again. We are, in all our eleven ships, about seven hundred persons, passengers, and two hundred and forty cows, and about sixty horses. The ship, which went from Plimouth, carried about one hundred and forty persons, and the ship, which goes from Bristowe, carrieth about eighty persons. And now (my sweet soul) I must once again take my last farewell of thee

in Old England. It goeth very near my heart to leave thee; but I know to whom I have committed thee, even to him who loves thee much better than any husband can, who hath taken account of the hairs of thy head, and puts all thy tears in his bottle, who can, and (if it be for his glory) will bring us together again with peace and comfort. Oh, how it refresheth my heart, to think, that I shall yet again see thy sweet face in the land of the living!—that lovely countenance, that I have so much delighted in, and beheld with so great content! I have hitherto been so taken up with business, as I could seldom look back to my former happiness; but now, when I shall be at some leisure, I shall not avoid the remembrance of thee, nor the grief for thy absence. Thou hast thy share with me, but I hope the course we have agreed upon will be some ease to us both. Mondays and Fridays, at five of the clock at night, we shall meet in spirit till we meet in person. Yet, if all these hopes should fail, blessed be our God, that we are assured we shall meet one day, if not as husband and wife, yet in a better condition. Let that stay and comfort thy heart. Neither can the sea drown thy husband, nor enemies destroy, nor any adversity deprive thee of thy husband or children. Therefore I will only take thee now and my sweet children in mine arms, and kiss and embrace you all, and so leave you with my God. Farewell, farewell. I bless you all in the name of the Lord Jesus. I salute my daughter Winth. Matt. Nan. and the rest, and all my good neighbors and friends. Pray all for us. Farewell. Commend my blessing to my son John. I cannot now write to him; but tell him I have committed thee and thine to him. Labor to draw him yet nearer to God, and he will be the surer staff of comfort to thee. I cannot name the rest of my good friends, but thou canst supply it. I wrote, a week

since, to thee and Mr. Leigh, and divers others.
Thine wheresoever,

Jo. WINTHROP.

From aboard the ARBELLA, riding at the COWES,
March 28, 1630.

I would have written to my brother and sister
Gostling, but it is near midnight. Let this excuse;
and commend my love to them and all theirs.

TO HIS WIFE

To my very loving Wife, Mrs. Winthrop,
the elder, at Groton, in Suffolk, near
Sudbury. From New England.

CHARLETON IN NEW ENGLAND,
July 16, 1630.

MY DEAR WIFE,—Blessed be the Lord, our
good God and merciful Father, that yet hath pre-
served me in life and health to salute thee, and
to comfort thy long longing heart with the joy-
ful news of my welfare, and the welfare of thy
beloved children.

We had a long and troublesome passage, but
the Lord made it safe and easy to us; and though
we have met with many and great troubles, (as
this bearer can certify thee,) yet he hath pleased
to uphold us, and to give us hope of a happy
issue.

I am so overpressed with business, as I have
no time for these or other mine own private
occasions. I only write now, that thou mayest
know, that yet I live and am mindful of thee in
all my affairs. The larger discourse of all things
thou shalt receive from my brother Downing,
which I must send by some of the last ships. We
have met with many sad and discomfortable
things, as thou shalt hear after; and the Lord's
hand hath been heavy upon myself in some very
near to me. My son Henry!¹ my son Henry! ah,
poor child! Yet it grieves me much more for my
dear daughter. The Lord strengthen and com-
fort her heart, to bear this cross patiently. I know
thou wilt not be wanting to her in this distress.
Yet, for all these things, (I praise my God,) I am
not discouraged; nor do I see cause to repent or
despair of those good days here, which will make
amends for all.

¹ Henry, Winthrop's son by his first wife, was
drowned at Salem on the day of his arrival in the
New World.

I shall expect thee next summer, (if the Lord
please,) and by that time I hope to be provided
for thy comfortable entertainment. My most
sweet wife, be not disheartened; trust in the
Lord, and thou shalt see his faithfulness. Com-
mend me heartily to all our kind friends at
Castleins, Groton Hall, Mr Leigh and his wife,
my neighbor Cole, and all the rest of my neigh-
bors and their wives, both rich and poor.

Remember me to them at Assington Hall, and
Coddenham Hall, Mr. Brand, Mr. Alston, Mr.
Mott, and their wives, Goodman Pond, Charles
Newton, etc The good Lord be with thee and
bless thee and all our children and servants.
Commend my love to them all. I kiss and em-
brace thee, my dear wife, and all my children,
and leave thee in his arms, who is able to pre-
serve you all, and to fulfill our joy in our happy
meeting in his good time. Amen.

Thy faithful husband,

Jo. WINTHROP.

I shall write to my son John by London.

TO JOHN WINTHROP, JR.

This fragment of a letter, dated 1643, is given in
Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana*, Book
II, Chapter 11.

You are the chief of two families; I had by
your mother three sons and three daughters, and
I had with her a large portion of outward estate.
These now are all gone; mother gone; brethren
and sisters gone; you only are left to see the
vanity of these temporal things, and learn wis-
dom thereby, which may be of more use to you,
through the Lord's blessing, than all that in-
heritance which might have befallen you: and
for which this may stay and quiet your heart,
that God is able to give you more than this; and
that it being spent in the furtherance of his
work, which hath here prospered so well,
through his power hitherto, you and yours may
certainly expect a liberal portion in the pros-
perity and blessing thereof hereafter; and the
rather, because it was not forced from you by a
father's power, but freely resigned by yourself,
out of a loving and filial respect unto me, and
your own readiness unto the work itself. From
whence as I often do take occasion to bless the
Lord for you, so do I also commend you and
yours to his fatherly blessing, for a plentiful re-

ward to be rendred unto you. And doubt not, my dear son, but let your faith be built upon his promise and faithfulness, that as he hath carried you hitherto through many perils, and provided liberally for you, so he will do for the time to come, and will never fail you, nor forsake you.—My son, the Lord knows how dear thou art to me, and that my care has been more for thee than for my self. But I know thy prosperity depends not on my care, nor on thine own, but upon the blessing of our Heavenly Father; neither doth it on the things of this world, but on the light of God's countenance, through the merit and mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is that only which can give us peace of conscience with contentation; which can as well make our lives happy and comfortable in a mean estate, as in a great abundance. But if you weigh things aright, and sum up all the turnings of divine Providence together, you shall find great advantage.—The Lord hath brought us to a good land; a land, where we enjoy outward peace and liberty, and above all, the blessings of the gospel, without the burden of impositions in matters of religion. Many thousands there are who would give great estates to enjoy our condition. Labour, therefore, my good son, to increase your thankfulness to God for all his mercies to thee, especially for that he hath revealed his everlasting good will to thee in Jesus Christ, and joined thee to the visible body of his church, in the fellowship of his people, and hath saved thee in all thy travails abroad, from being infected with the vices of those countries where thou hast been, (a mercy vouchsafed but unto few young gentlemen travellers). Let Him have the honor of it who kept thee. He it was who gave thee favour in the eyes of all with whom thou hadst to do, both by sea and land; he it was who saved thee in all perils; and he it is who hath given thee a gift in understanding and art; and he it is who hath provided thee a blessing in marriage, a comfortable help, and many sweet children; and hath hitherto provided liberally for you all; and therefore I would have you to love him again, and serve him, and trust him for the time to come. Love and prize that word of truth, which only makes known to you the precious and eternal thoughts and councils of the light inaccessible. Deny your own wisdom, that you may find his; and esteem it the greatest honour to lye under the simplicity of

the gospel of Christ crucified, without which you can never enter into the secrets of his tabernacle, nor enjoy those sweet things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor can the heart of man conceive: but God hath granted unto some few to know them even in this life. Study well, my son, the saying of the apostle, Knowledge puffeth up. It is a good gift of God, but when it lifts up the minds above the cross of Christ, it is the pride of life, and the high way to apostacy, wherein many men of great learning and hopes have perished. In all the exercise of your gifts, and improvement of your talents, have an eye to your master's end, more than to your own; and to the day of your account, that you may then have your *Quietus est*,² even, Well done, good and faithful servant! But my last and chief request to you, is, that you be careful to have your children brought up in the knowledge and fear of God, and in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. This will give you the best comfort of them, and keep them sure from any want or miscarriage: and when you part from them, it will be no small joy to your soul, that you shall meet them again in Heaven.

[On Liberty]

[1645] I suppose something may be expected from me, upon this charge [of exceeding the powers of deputy governor] which has befallen me, which moves me to speak now to you; yet I intend not to intermeddle in the proceedings of the court, or with any of the persons concerned therein. Only I bless God, that I see an issue of this troublesome business. I also acknowledge the justice of the court, and, for mine own part, I am well satisfied, I was publicly charged, and I am publicly and legally acquitted, which is all I did expect or desire. And though this be sufficient for my justification before men, yet not so before the God, who hath seen so much amiss in my dispensations (and even in this affair) as calls me to be humble. For to be publicly and criminally charged in this court, is matter of humiliation, (and I desire to make a right use of it,) notwithstanding I be thus acquitted. If her father had spit in her face, (saith the Lord concerning Miriam,) should she not have been ashamed seven days? Shame had lien upon her,

² Discharge; literally, he is discharged.

whatever the occasion had been. I am unwilling to stay you from your urgent affairs, yet give me leave (upon this special occasion) to speak a little more to this assembly. It may be of some good use, to inform and rectify the judgments of some of the people, and may prevent such distempers as have arisen amongst us.

The great questions that have troubled the country, are about the authority of the magistrates and the liberty of the people. It is yourselves who have called us to this office, and being called by you, we have our authority from God, in way of an ordinance, such as hath the image of God eminently stamped upon it, the contempt and violation whereof hath been vindicated with examples of divine vengeance. I entreat you to consider, that when you choose magistrates, you take them from among yourselves, men subject to like passions as you are. Therefore when you see infirmities in us, you should reflect upon your own, and that make you bear the more with us, and not be severe censurers of the failings of your magistrates, when you have continual experience of the like infirmities in yourselves and others. We account him a good servant, who breaks not his covenant. The covenant between you and us is the oath you have taken of us, which is to this purpose, that we shall govern you and judge your causes by the rules of God's laws and our own, according to our best skill. When you agree with a workman to build you a ship or house, etc., he undertakes as well for his skill as for his faithfulness, for it is his profession, and you pay him for both. But when you call one to be a magistrate, he doth not profess nor undertake to have sufficient skill for that office, nor can you furnish him with gifts, etc., therefore you must run the hazard of his skill and ability. But if he fail in faithfulness, which by his oath he is bound unto, that he must answer for. If it fall out that the case be clear to common apprehension, and the rule clear, also, if he transgress here, the error is not in the skill, but in the evil of the will; it must be required of him. But if the case be doubtful, or the rule doubtful, to men of such understanding and parts as your magistrates are, if your magistrates should err here, yourselves must bear it.

For the other point concerning liberty, I observe a great mistake in the country about that. There is a twofold liberty, natural (I mean as

our nature is now corrupt) and civil or federal. The first is common to man with beasts and other creatures. By this, man, as he stands in relation to man simply, hath liberty to do what he lists, it is a liberty to evil as well as to good. This liberty is incompatible and inconsistent with authority, and cannot endure the least restraint of the most just authority. The exercise and maintaining of this liberty makes men grow more evil, and in time to be worse than brute beasts: *omnes sumus licentia deteriores*. This is that great enemy of truth and peace, that wild beast, which all the ordinances of God are bent against, to restrain and subdue it. The other kind of liberty I call civil or federal, it may also be termed moral, in reference to the covenant between God and man, in the moral law, and the politic covenants and constitutions, amongst men themselves. This is the proper end and object of authority, and cannot subsist without it; and it is a liberty to that only which is good, just, and honest. This liberty you are to stand for, with the hazard (not only of your goods, but) of your lives, if need be. Whatsoever crosseth this, is not authority, but a distemper thereof. This liberty is maintained and exercised in a way of subjection to authority; it is of the same kind of liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. The woman's own choice makes such a man her husband; yet being so chosen, he is her lord, and she is to be subject to him, yet in a way of liberty, not of bondage; and a true wife accounts her subjection her honor and freedom, and would not think her condition safe and free, but in her subjection to her husband's authority. Such is the liberty of the church under the authority of Christ, her king and husband; his yoke is so easy and sweet to her as a bride's ornaments; and if through frowardness or wantonness, etc., she shake it off, at any time, she is at no rest in her spirit, until she take it up again; and whether her lord smiles upon her, and embraceth her in his arms, or whether he frowns, or rebukes, or smites her, she apprehends the sweetness of his love in all, and is refreshed, supported, and instructed by every such dispensation of his authority over her. On the other side, ye know who they are that complain of this yoke and say, let us break their bands, etc., we will not have this man to rule over us. Even so, brethren, it will be between you and your magistrates. If you stand for your natural cor-

rupt liberties, and will do what is good in your own eyes, you will not endure the least weight of authority, but will murmur, and oppose, and be always striving to shake off that yoke; but if you will be satisfied to enjoy such civil and lawful liberties, such as Christ allows you, then will you quietly and cheerfully submit unto that

authority which is set over you, in all the administrations of it, for your good. Wherein, if we fail at any time, we hope we shall be willing (by God's assistance) to hearken to good advice from any of you, or in any other way of God; so shall your liberties be preserved, in upholding the honor and power of authority amongst you.

THOMAS MORTON

1575?-1646

Morton, who was trained as a lawyer, visited New England in 1622. He returned in 1625 with immigrants and established a trading station at Merry Mount (now Braintree). This settlement must have been something like a frontier town in the West of later times. The Pilgrims were disturbed because Morton gave guns to the Indians, but setting up a maypole was his crowning offense. Morton was arrested and sent to England, and the name Merry Mount was changed to Mount Dagon. He eventually returned to New England and died in Maine. His book was published in Amsterdam in 1637. The best edition is that of Charles Francis Adams (1883). Morton's account should be compared with Bradford's, and both with the idealized account in Hawthorne's "The Maypole of Merry Mount."

[Merry Mount]

from NEW ENGLISH CANAAN (1637)

The inhabitants of Pasonagessit (having translated the name of their habitation from that ancient Salvage name to Ma-re Mount; and being resolved to have the new name confirmed for a memorial to after ages) did devise amongst themselves to have it performed in a solemn manner with Revels, & merriment after the old English custome: prepared to sett up a Maypole upon the festivall day of Philip and Jacob; & therefore brewed a barrell of excellent beare, &

provided a case of bottles to be spent, with other good cheare, for all commers of that day. And because they would have it in a compleat forme, they had prepared a song fitting to the time and present occasion. And upon May-day they brought the Maypole to the place appointed. with drummes, gunnes, pistols, and other fitting instruments, for that purpose; and there erected it with the help of Salvages, that came thether of purpose to see the manner of our Revels. A goodly pine tree of 80. foote longe, was reared up, with a peare of buckshorns nayled one, somewhat neare unto the top of it: where it stood as

a faire sea marke for directions; how to finde out the way to mine Hoste of Ma-re Mount. - - -

The setting up of this Maypole was a lamentable spectacle to the precise seperatists; that lived at new Plimmouth. They termed it an Idoll; yea they called it the Calfe of Horeb, and stood at defiance with the place, naming it Mount Dagon; threatening to make it a woefull mount and not a merry mount. - - -

There was likewise a merry song made, which (to make their Revells more fashionable) was sung with a Corus, every man bearing his part; which they performed in a daunce, hand in hand about the Maypole, whiles one of the Company sung, and filled out the good liquor like gammedes [Ganymede] and Jupiter.

THE SONGE

*Cor. Drinke and be merry, merry, merry boyes,
Let all your delight be in Hymens joyes,
Ió to Hymen now the day is come,
About the merry Maypole take a Roome.
Make greene garlons, bring bottles out;
And fill sweet Nectar, freely about,
Uncover thy head, and feare no harme,
For hers good liquor to keepe it warme.
Then drinke and be merry, &c.
Ió to Hymen, &c.*

*Nectar is a thung assign'd,
By the Deities owne minde,
To cure the hart opprest with greife,
And of good liquors is the cheife,
Then drinke, &c.*

*Ió to Hymen, &c.
Give the Mellancolly man,
A cup or two of 't now and than;
This physick will soone revive his bloud,
And make him be of a merrier moode.
Then drinke, &c.
Ió to Hymen, &c.*

*Give to the Nymphe thats free from scorne,
No Irish stuff nor Scotch overworne,
Lasses in beaver coats come away,
Yee shall be welcome to us night and day.
To drinke and be merry &c.
Ió to Hymen, &c.*

This harmeles mirth made by younge men (that lived in hope to have wives brought over to them, that would save them a laboure to make a voyage to fetch any over) was much distasted, of the precise Seperatists: that keepe much a doe, about the tyth of Muit and Cummin; troubling their braines more then reason would require about things that are indifferent: and from that

time sought occasion against my honest Host of Ma-re Mount to overthrow his ondertakings, and to destroy his plantaution quite and cleane. - - -

The Seperatists, envying the prosperity and hope of the Plantation at Ma-re Mount, (which they perceaved beganne to come forward, and to be in a good way for game in the Beaver trade,) conspired together against mine Host especially, (who was the owner of that Plantation,) and made up a party against him; and mustred up what aide they could, accounting of him as of a great Monster.

Many threatening speeches were given out both against his person and his Habitation, which they divulged should be consumed with fire: And taking advantage of the time when his company, (which seemed little to regard theire threats,) were gone up into the Inlands to trade with the Salvages for Beaver, they set upon my honest host at a place called Wessaguscus, where, by accident, they found him. The inhabitants there were in good hope of the subversion of the plantation at Mare Mount, (which they principally aymed at;) and the rather because mine host was a man that indeavoured to advaunce the dignity of the Church of England; which they, (on the contrary part,) would laboure to vilifie with uncivile termes: envyeing against the sacred booke of common prayer, and mine host that used it in a laudable manner amongst his family, as a practise of piety.

There hee would be a meanes to bring sacks to their mill, (such is the thirst after Beaver,) and helped the conspiratores to surprise mine host, (who was there all alone;) and they charged him, (because they would seeme to have some reasonable cause against him to sett a glosse upon their mallice,) with criminall things; which indeede had beene done by such a person, but was of their conspiracy; mine host demaunded of the conspirators who it was that was author of that information, that seemed to be their ground for what they now intended. And because they answered they would not tell him, hee as peremptorily replied, that hee would not say whether he had, or he had not done as they had bin informed.

The answer made no matter, (as it seemed,) whether it had bin negatively or affirmatively made; for they had resolved that hee should suffer, because, (as they boasted,) they were now become the greater number: they had shaken

of their shackles of servitude, and were become Masters, and masterles people.

It appeares they were like beares whelps in former time, when mine hosts plantation was of as much strength as theirs, but now, (theirs being stronger,) they, (like overgrowne beares,) seemed monstrous. In breile, mine host must indure to be their prisoner untill they could contrive it so that they might send him for England, (as they said,) there to suffer according to the merrit of the fact which they intended to father upon him, supposing, (belike,) it would proove a hainous crime.

Much rejoycing was made that they had gotten their capitall enemy, (as they concluded him;) whome they purposed to hamper in such sort that hee should not be able to uphold his plantation at Ma-re Mount.

The Conspirators sported themselves at my honest host, that meant them no hurt, and were so joccund that they feasted their bodies, and fell to tuppeling as if they had obtained a great prize; like the Trojans when they had the custody of Hippeus pinetree horse.

Mine host fained greefe, and could not be perswaded either to eate or drinke; because hee knew emptines would be a meanes to make him as watchfull as the Geese kept in the Roman Cappitall: whereon, the contrary part, the conspirators would be so drowsy that hee might have an opportunity to give them a slip, insteade of a tester. Six persons of the conspiracy were set to watch him at Wessaguscus: But hee kept waking; and in the dead of night, (one lying on the bed for further suerty,) up gets mine Host and got to the second dore that hee was to passe, which, notwithstanding the lock, hee got open, and shut it after him with such violence that it affrighted some of the conspirators.

The word, which was given with an alarme, was, *ô he's gon, he's gon, what shall wee doe, he's gon!* The rest, (halfe a sleepe,) start up in a maze, and, like rames, ran their heads one at another full butt in the darke.

Theire grande leader, Captaine Shrimp,¹ tooke on most furiously and tore his clothes for anger, to see the empty nest, and their bird gone.

The rest were eager to have torne their haire from their heads; but it was so short that it would give them no hold. Now Captaine Shrimp thought in the losse of this price, (which hee ac-

¹ Miles Standish.

counted his Master peece,) all his honor would be lost for ever.

In the meane time mine Host was got home to Ma-re Mount through the woods, eight miles round about the head of the river Monatoquit that parted the two Plantations, finding his way by the helpe of the lightening, (for it thundred as hee went terribly,) and there hee prepared powther, three pounds dried, for his present imployment, and foure good gunnes for him and the two assistants left at his howse, with bullets of severall sizes, three houndred or thereabouts, to be used if the conspirators should pursue him thether. and these two persons promised their aides in the quarrell, and confirmed that promise with health in good *rosa solis*.²

Now Captaine Shrimp, the first Captaine in the Land, (as hee supposed,) must doe some new act to repaire this losse, and, to vindicate his reputation, who had sustained blemish by this oversight, begins now to study, how to repaire or survive his honor: in this manner, callinge of Councell, they conclude.

Hee takes eight persons more to him, and, (like the nine Worthies of New Canaan,) they imbarque with preparation against Ma-re Mount, where this Monster of a man, as their phrase was, had his denne; the whole number, had the rest not bin from home, being but seaven, would have given Captain Shrimpe, (a quondam Drummer,) such a wellcome as would have made him wish for a Drume as bigg as Diogenes tubb, that hee might have crept into it out of sight.

Now the nine Worthies are approached, and mine Host prepared: having intelligence by a Salvage, that hastened in love from Wessaguscus to give him notice of their intent.

One of mine Hosts men prooved a craven: the other had prooved his wits to purchase a little valoure, before mine Host had observed his posture.

The nine worthies comming before the Denne of this supposed Monster, (this seaven headed hydra, as they termed him,) and began, like Don Quixote against the Windmill, to beate a parly, and to offer quarter, if mine Host would yeald; for they resolved to send him for England; and bad him lay by his armes.

But hee, (who was the Sonne of a Souldier,) having taken up armes in his just defence, replied that hee would not lay by those armes,

² A kind of cordial.

because they were so needefull at Sea, if hee should be sent over. Yet, to save the effusion of so much worthy bloud, as would have issued out of the vaynes of these 9. worthies of New Canaan, if mine Host should have played upon them out at his port holes, (for they came within danger like a flocke of wild geese, as if they had bin tayled one to another, as coult to be sold at a faier,) mine Host was content to yeelde upon quarter; and did capitulate with them in what manner it should be for more certainty, because hee knew what Captaine Shrimpe was.

Hee expressed that no violence should be offered to his person, none to his goods, nor any of his Howsehold: but that hee should have his armes, and what els was requisit for the the voyage: which theine Herald retornes, it was agreed upon, and should be performed.

But mine Host no sooner had set open the dore, and issued out, but instantly Captaine Shrimpe and the rest of the worthies stepped to him, layd hold of his armes, and had him

downe: and so eagerly was every man bent against him, (not regarding any agreement made with such a carnall man,) that they fell upon him as if they would have eaten him: some of them were so violent that they would have a slice with scabbert, and all for haste; until an old Souldier, (of the Queens, as the Proverbe is,) that was there by accident, clapt his gunne under the weapons, and sharply rebuked these worthies for their unworthy practises. So the matter was taken into more deliberate consideration.

Captaine Shrimp, and the rest of the nine worthies, made themselves, (by this outrageous riot,) Masters of mine Host of Ma-re Mount, and disposed of what hee had at his plantation.

This they knew, (in the eye of the Salvages,) would add to their glory, and diminish the reputation of mine honest Host; whome they practised to be ridd of upon any termes, as willingly as if hee had bin the very Hidra of the time.

NATHANIEL WARD

1578 - 1652

The Simple Cowler of Aggawam is certainly the brightest bit of Renaissance English penned in America—an Elizabethan clipped garden set down in a wilderness of theology.

—V. L. PARRINGTON, *The Colonial Mind* (1927), p. 76.

Nathaniel Ward, a minister's son, was born at Haverhill in County Essex, England, and educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. For at least a decade he practiced law. After taking orders, he was for some years chaplain to a company of British merchants at Elbing in Prussia. From 1626 to 1628 he was curate of the Church of St. James, Piccadilly, and from 1628 to 1633 rector of Stondon Massey in Essex. Deprived of his living by Archbishop Laud, he came to Massachusetts, where in 1634 we find him pastor of the church at Ipswich, or "Aggawam," as the Indians called it. He had a large part in formulating the laws of the

colony. He gave up his pastorate in 1636, perhaps on account of ill health, but he remained in Massachusetts until 1646. Back in England, he preached to the House of Commons in June, 1647, and until his death in 1652 was rector of the parish of Shenfield in his native Essex.

Under the pseudonym Theodore de la Guard he published in London in 1647 *The Simple Cobler of Aggawam in America*. There were five editions in that year and others in more recent times. The work has been highly praised by Moses Coit Tyler, V. L. Parrington, and other students of our early literature. Ward was older than most of his New England contemporaries, and his style is reminiscent of the Elizabethans. His book is a plea for Presbyterians and Independents to compose their differences and unite. It includes a notable discussion of women's dress, a moving appeal to King Charles, and an exhortation to the Puritan soldiers under Cromwell. Ward's views on the subject of religious toleration were very different from those of Roger Williams, who had published in 1644 *The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution*, which presumably Ward had read. The full title of Ward's book is *The Simple Cobler of Aggawam in America. Willing to help 'mend his Native Country, lamentably tattered, both in the upper-Leather and sole, with all the honest stitches he can take. And as willing never to bee paid for his work, by Old English wonted pay. It is his Trade to patch all the year long, gratis. Therefore I pray Gentlemen keep your purses. By Theodore de la Guard. Ward is reported by Cotton Mather to have said: "I have only two Comforts to live upon: The one is, in the Perfections of Christ; the other is in the Imperfections of all Christians."*

from THE SIMPLE COBLER OF
AGGAWAM IN AMERICA (1647)

[Against Toleration]

My heart hath naturally detested foure things: 5
The standing of the Apocrypha in the Bible;
Forrainers dwelling in my Countrey, to crowd
out native Subjects into the corners of the Earth;
Alchymized coines: Toleration of divers Rel-
igions, or of one Religion in segregant shapes: 10
He that willingly assents to the last, if he exam-
ines his heart by day-light, his conscience will
tell him, he is either an Atheist, or an Heretique,
or an Hypocrite, or at best a captive to some
lust: polchpiety is the greatest impiety in the 15
world. True Religion is *Ignis probationis*,
which doth congregare homogenea & segregare
heterogenia.¹

¹ True religion is "the fire of proof" which
"unites the like-minded and separates the hetero-
geneous."

Not to tolerate things meerly indifferent to
weak consciences, argues a conscience too strong:
pressed uniformity in these, causes much dis-
unity: To tolerate more than indifferents, is not
to deale indifferently with God; He that doth
it, takes his Scepter out of His hand, and bids
Him stand by. The power of all Religion and
Ordinances, lies in their purity: their purity in
their simplicity: then are mixtures pernicious. I
lived in a City, where a Papist Preached in one
Church, a Lutheran in another, a Calvinist in
a third; a Lutheran one part of the day, a Cal-
vinist the other, in the same Pulpit: the Re-
ligion of that place was but motly and meagre,
their affections Leopard-like. - -

That State is wise, that will improve all paines
and patience rather to compose, then [than] tol-
erate differences in Religion. There is no divine
Truth, but hath much Celestiall fire in it from
the Spirit of Truth: nor no irreligious untruth,
without its proportion of Antifire from the
Spirit of Error to contradict it: the zeale of

the one, the virulency of the other, must necessarily kindle Combustions. Fiery diseases seated in the spirit, embroile the whole frame of the body, others more externall and coole, are lesse dangerous. They which divide in Religion, divide in God; they who divide in him, divide beyond *Genus Generalissimum*,² where there is no reconciliation, without atonement, that is, without uniting in him, who is One, and in his Truth, which is also one. - - -

Concerning Tolerations I may further assert.

That Persecution of true Religion, and Toleration of false are the *Jannes* and *Jambres* to the Kingdome of Christ, whereof the last is farre the worst. *Augustines* tongue had not owed his mouth one penny-rent though it had never spake word more in it, but this, *Nullum malum pejus libertate errandi*.³

He that is willing to tolerate any Religion, or discrepant way of Religion, besides his owne, unlesse it be in matters meerly indifferent, either doubts of his owne, or is not sincere in it.

He that is willing to tolerate any unsound Opinion, that his owne may also be tolerated, though never so sound, will for a need hang Gods Bible at the Devills girdle.

Every Toleration of false Religions, or Opinions hath as many Errors and sinnes in it, as all the false Religions and Opinions it tolerates, and one sound one more.

That State that will give Liberty of Conscience in matters of Religion, must give Liberty of Conscience and Conversation in their Morall Lawes, or else the Fiddle will be out of tune, and some of the strings cracke.

He that will rather make an irreligious quarrell with other Religions, then try the Truth of his own by valuable Arguments, and peaceable Sufferings, either his Religion, or himselfe is irreligious.

Experience will teach Churches and Christians, that it is farre better to live in a State united, though somewhat Corrupt, then in a State, whereof some Part is Incorrupt, and all the rest divided.

I am not altogether ignorant of the eight Rules given by Orthodox Divines, about giving Tolerations, yet with their favour I dare affirme,

That there is no Rule given by God for any State to give an Affirmative Toleration to any

false Religion, or Opinion whatsoever; they must connive in some Cases, but may not concede in any.

That the State of *England* (so farre as my Intelligence serves) might in time have prevented with ease, and may yet without any great difficulty deny both Toleration, and Connivances *salva Republica*.⁴

That if the State of *England* shall either willingly Tolerate, or weakly connive at such Courses, the Church of that Kingdome will sooner become the Devills Dancing-Schoole, then Gods-Temple. The Civill State a Beare-garden, then an Exchange. The whole Realme a Pais base,⁵ then an *England*. And what pity it is, that that Country which hath been the Staple of Truth to all Christendome, should now become the Aviary of Errors to the whole World, let every fearing heart judge.

I take Liberty of Conscience to bee nothing but a freedome from sinne, and error. *Conscientia in tantum libera, in quantum ab errore liberata*.⁶ And liberty of Error nothing but a Prison for Conscience. Then small will bee the kindnesse of a State to build such Prisons for their Subjects.

The Scripture saith, there is nothing makes free but Truth, and Truth saith, there is no Truth but One: If the States of the World would make it their sumoperous Care to preserve this One Truth in its purity and Authority it would ease them of all other Politicall cares. I am sure Satan makes it his grand, if not onely task, to adulterate Truth; Falshood is his sole Scepter, whereby he first ruffled, and ever since ruined the World.

[Women and Dress]

Should I not keep promise in speaking a little to Womens fashions, they would take it unkindly: I was loath to pester better matter with such stuffe; I rather thought it meete to let them stand by themselves, like the *Quae Genus*⁷ in the Grammar, being Deficients, or Redundants, not to bee brought under any Rule: I shall therefore make bold for this once, to borrow

⁴ Without injuring the state.

⁵ A low place; i.e., the Netherlands, where various Protestant sects were tolerated.

⁶ The conscience is free in so far as it is liberated from error.

⁷ What gender.

² The most generic genus.

³ No liberty is worse than the liberty to err.

a little of their loose-tongue Liberty, and mispend a word or two upon their long-wasted, but short-skirted patience: a little use of my stirrup will doe no harme.

*Ridentem dicere verum, quid prohibet?*⁸
Gray Gravity it selfe can well beleame,
That Language be adapted to the Theme.
He that to Parrots speaks, must parrotise;
He that instructs a foole, may act th' unwise.

It is known more then enough, that I am neither Nigard, nor Cinick, to the due bravery⁹ of the true Gentry: if any man mislikes a bully mong drassock more then I, let him take her for all mee: I honour the woman that can honour her self with her atture: a good Text alwayes deserves a fair Margent: I am not much offended, if I see a trimme, far trimmer than she that wears it: in a word, whatever Christianity or Civility will allow, I can afford with *London measure*: but when I heare a nugiperous Gentledame inquire, what dresse the Queen is in this week; what the nudiustertian fashion of the Court; I mean the very newest: with egge to be in it in all haste, what-ever it be; I look at her as the very gizzard of a trifle, the product of a quarter of a cypher, the epitome of nothing, fitter to be kickt, if she were of a kickable substance, than either honoured or humoured.

To speak moderately, I truely confesse, it is beyond the ken of my understanding to conceive, how those women should have any true grace, or valuable vertue, that have so little wit, as to disfigure themselves with such exotick garbes, as not onely dismantles their native lovely lustre, but transclouts them into gant bar-geese, ill-shapen shotten shell-fish, Egyptian Hieroglyphicks, or at the best into French flurts of the pastery, which a proper English woman should scorn with her heeles: it is no marvell they weare drailes on the hinder part of their heads, having nothing as it seems in the forepart, but a few Squirrills braines, to help them frisk from one ill-favor'd fashion to another.

These whimm' Crown'd shees, these fashion-fansying wits,
Are empty thin brain'd shells, and fidling Kits,

⁸ What forbids that one who laughs should speak truth?

⁹ Fine clothing proper for the gentry.

The very troublers and impoverishers of mankind. I can hardly forbear to commend to the world a saying of a Lady living sometime with the Queen of *Bohemiah*, I know not where she found it, but it is pittie it should be lost.

The world is full of care, much like unto a bubble,
Women and care, and care and women, and women
and care and trouble.

10 The Verses are even enough for such odde pegma's. I can make my self sick at any time, with comparing the dazzling splendor wherewith our Gentlewomen were embellished in some former habits, with the gut-foundred goosdome, wherewith they are now surcingle and debauched. We have about five or six of them in our Colony: if I see any of them accidentally, I cannot cleanse my phansie of them for a moneth after. I have been a solitary wid-
 15 dower almost twelve years, purposed lately to make a step over to my Native Country for a yoke-fellow: but when I consider how women there have tripe-wifed themselves with their cladments, I have no heart to the voyage, lest their nauseous shapes and the Sea, should work
 20 too sorely upon my stomach. I speak sadly; me thinks it should break the hearts of English-men, to see so many goodly English-women imprisoned in French Cages, peering out of their hood-holes for some men of mercy to help them with a little wit, and no body relieves them.

It is a more common then convenient saying, that nine Taylors make a man: it were well if
 25 nineteene could make a woman to her munde: if Taylors were men indeed, well furnished but with meere morall principles, they would disdain to be led about like Apes, by such mymick Marmosets. It is a most unworthy thing, for men that have bones in them, to spend their lives in
 30 making fiddle-cases for futilous womens phansies; which are the very pettitoes of infirmity, the gyblets of perquisquilian toys. I am so charitable to think, that most of that mystery, would work the cheerfuller while they live, if they might be
 35 well discharged of the tiring slavery of mis-tyring women: it is no little labour to be continually putting up English-women into Out-landish caskes; who if they be not shifted anew, once in a few moneths, grow too sowre for their Hus-
 40 bands. What this Trade will answer for themselves when God shall take measure of Taylors
 45

consciences is beyond my skill to imagine. There was a time when

*The joyning of the Red-Rose with the White,
Did set our State into a Damask plight.*

But now our Roses are turned to *Flore de lices*, our Carnations to Tulips, our Gilliflowers to Pansies, our City-Dames to an indenominable Quaemalry of overturcas'd things. Hee that makes Coates for the Moone, had need to take

measure every noone; and he that makes for women, every Moone, to keep them from Lunacy. I have often heard diverse Ladies vent loud feminine complaints of the wearisome varieties and chargeable changes of fashions: I marvell themselves preferre not a Bill of redresse. I would *Essex* Ladies would lead the Chore, for the honour of their Country and persons; or rather the thrice honourable Ladies of the Court, whom it best besecmes: who may wel presume of a *Le Roy le veult* from our sober King, a *Les Seigneurs ont Assensus*¹⁰ from our prudent Peers, and the like *Assensus* from our considerate, I dare not say wife-worne Commons. who I beleewe had much rather passe one such Bill, than to pay so many Taylors Bills as they are forced to doe.

Most deare and unparallel'd Ladyes, be pleased to attempt it: as you have the precellency of the women of the world for beauty and feature; so assume the honour to give, and not take Law from any, in matter of attire: if ye can transact so faire a motion among your selves unanimously, I dare say, they that most renite, will least repent. What greater honour can your Honors desire, then to build a Promontory president to all foraigne Ladies, to deserve so eminently at the hands of all the English Gentry, present and to come: and to confute the opinion of all the wise men in the world; who never thought it possible for women to doe so good a work.

I addresse my self to those who can both heare and mend all if they please: I seriously feare, if the pious Parliament doe not finde a time to state fashions, as ancient Parliaments have done in some part, God will hardly finde a time to state Religion or Peace: They are the surguedryes of

¹⁰ "The King wills it" and "The Lords have assented"—traditional formulas used by the King and the House of Lords in approving an act of Parliament.

pride, the wantonnesse of idlenesse, provoking sins, the certain prodromics of assured judgment, *Zeph. I.7,8.*

It is beyond all account, how many Gentlemens and Citizens estates are deplumed by their feather-headed wives; what usefull supplies the pannage of *England* would afford other Countries, what rich returnes to it self, if it were not slic'd out into male and female fripperies: and what a multitude of mis-employ'd hands, might be better improv'd in some more manly Manufactures for the publique weale. it is not easily credible, what may be said of the preterpluralities of Taylors in *London*. I have heard an honest man say that not long since there were numbered between *Temple barre* and *Charingcrosse*, eight thousand of that Trade: let it be conjectured by that proportion how many there are in and about *London*, and in all *England*, they will appeare to be very numerous. If the Parliament would please to mend women, which their Husbands dare not doe, there need not so many men to make and 'mend as there are. I hope the present dolefull estate of the Realme, will perswade more strongly to some considerate course hercin, than *I* now can.

Knew I how to bring it in, I would speak a word to long haire, whereof I will say no more but this: if God proves not such a Barbor to it as he threatens, unlesse it be amended, *Esa. 7.20.* before the Peace of the State and Church be well settled, then let my prophecy be scorned, as a sound minde scorns the ryot of that sin, and more it needs not. If those who are teamed Rattle-heads and impuritans, would take up a Resolution to begin in moderation of haire, to the just reproach of those that are called Puritans and Round-heads, I would honour their manlinesse, as much as the others godlinesse, so long as I knew what man or honour meant: if neither can find a Barbours shop, let them turne in, to *Psal. 68.21. Jer. 7.29. I Cor. 11.14.* if it be thought no wisdome in men to distinguish themselves in the field by the Scissers, let it be thought no injustice in God, not to distinguish them by the Sword. I had rather God should know me by my sobriety, than mine enemy not know me by my vanity. He is ill kept, that is kept by his own sin. A short Promise, is a farre safer guard than a long lock: it is an ill distinction which God is loth to look at, and his Angels cannot know his Saints by.

Though it be not the mark of the Beast, yet it may be the mark of a beast prepared to slaughter. I am sure men use not to weare such manes, I am also sure Souldiers use to weare other marklets or notadoes in time of battell. - - -

[To Puritan Soldiers in England]

Goe on brave Englishmen, in the name of God, go on prosperously, because of Truth and Righteousnes: Yee that have the Cause of Religion, the life of your Kingdome and of all the good that is in it in your hands: Goe on undauntedly: As you are Called and Chosen, so be faithful: Yee fight the battells of the Lord, bee neither desidious nor perfidious: You serve the King of Kings, who stiles you his heavenly Regiments. Consider well, what impregnable fighting is in heaven, where the Lord of Hosts is your Generall, his Angells, your Colonells, the Stars, your fellow-souldiers, his Saints, your Oratours, his Promises, your victuallers, his Truth, your Trenches; where Drums are Harps, Trumpets joyfull sounds; your Ensignes, Christs Banners; where your weapons and armour, are spirituall, therefore irresistible, therefore impier[c]eable; where Sunne and wind cannot disadvantage you, you are above them, where hell itselfe cannot hurt you, where your swords are furbushed and sharpened, by him that made their metall, where your wounds are bound up with the oyle of a good Cause, where your blood runnes into the veynes of Christ, where sudden death is present martyrdome and life; your funeralls resurrections; your honour, glory; where your widows and babes are received into perpetuall pensions; your names listed among *Dauids* Worthies; where your greatest losses are greatest gaines; and where you leave the troubles of warre, to lye downe in downy beds of eternall rest.

What good will it doe you, deare Countrymen, to live without lives, to enjoy *England* without the God of *England*, your Kingdome without a

Parliament, your Parliament without power, your Liberties without stability, your Lawes without Justice, your honours without vertue, your beings without tranquility, your wives without honesty, your children without morality, your servants without civility, your lands without propriety, your goods without immunity, the Gospel without salvation, your Churches without Ministry, your Ministers without piety, and all you have or can have, with more teares and bitterness of heart, than all you have and shall have will sweeten or wipe away?

Goe on therefore Renowned Gentlemen, fall on resolvedly, till your hands cleave to your swords, your swords to your enemies hearts, your hearts to victory, your victories to triumph, your triumphs to the everlasting praise of him that hath given you Spirits to offer your selves willingly, and to jeopard your lives in high perills, for his Name and service sake.

And Wee your Brethren, though we necessarily abide beyond *Jordan*, and remaine on the American Sea-coasts, will send up Armies of prayers to the Throne of Grace, that the God of power and goodnesse, would encourage your hearts, cover your heads, strengthen your arms, pardon your sinnes, save your soules, and blesse your families, in the day of Battell. Wee will also pray, that the same Lord of Hosts, would discover the Counsells, defeat the Enterprizes, deride the hopes, disdain the insolencies, and wound the hairy scalpes of your obstinate Enemies, and yet pardon all that are unwillingly misled. Wee will likewise helpe you beleieve that God will be seene on the Mount, that it is all one with him, to save by many or few, and that he doth but humble and try you for the present, that he may doe you good at the latter end. All which hee bring to passe who is able to doe exceeding abundantly, above all we can aske or thinke, for his Truth and mercy sake in *Jesus Christ*.

Amen. Amen.

ANNE BRADSTREET

1612? - 1672

Mrs. Anne Bradstreet, an English gentlewoman by birth, was the daughter of Thomas Dudley and the wife of Simon Bradstreet, both of whom were Governors of Massachusetts. She came to the colony in 1630 with John Winthrop. She had eight children, and among her descendants are Dr. Channing, the two Richard Henry Danas, Wendell Phillips, and Oliver Wendell Holmes. A volume of her poems was published in London in 1650 under the title, *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung up in America*. . . . A second edition with new poems was published in Boston in 1678, six years after her death. The best edition of her poems is that edited by J. H. Ellis (1867, 1932). There is a biography, *Anne Bradstreet and Her Time* (1891), by Helen Campbell. Mrs. Bradstreet's poems, though written in New England, might, so far as the reader can tell, equally well have been written in Old England. Her models were not the great Elizabethans or her contemporary John Milton but such third-rate poets as Joshua Sylvester, whose translation (from the French) of Du Bartas's *Divine Weeks and Works* was popular among the Puritans.

TO MY DEAR AND LOVING HUSBAND (1678)

If ever two were one, then surely we.
If ever man were lov'd by wife, then thee;
If ever wife was happy in a man,
Compare with me ye women if you can.
I prize thy love more than whole Mines of gold, 10
Or all the riches that the East doth hold.
My love is such that Rivers cannot quench,
Nor ought but love from thee, give recompence.
Thy love is such I can no way repay,
The heavens reward thee manifold I pray.

Then while we live, in love lets so persever,
That when we live no more, we may live ever.

5 THE AUTHOR TO HER BOOK (1678)

Thou ill-form'd offspring of my feeble brain,
Who after birth did'st by my side remain,
Till snatcht from thence by friends, less wise than 10
true
Who thee abroad, expos'd to publick view,
Made thee in raggs, halting to th' press to trudge,
Where errors were not lessened (all may judge)
15 At thy return my blushing was not small,

My rambling brat (in print) should mother call,
 I cast thee by as one unfit for light,
 Thy Visage was so irksome in my light;
 Yet being mine own, at length affection would
 Thy blemishes amend, if so I could:
 I wash'd thy face, but more defects I saw,
 And rubbing off a spot, still made a flaw.
 I stretcht thy joynts to make thee even feet,
 Yet still thou run'st more hobling then is meet;

In better dress to trim thee was my mind,
 But nought save home-spun Cloth, i' th' house I
 find
 In this array, 'mongst Vulgars mayst thou roam
 5 In Criticks hands, beware thou dost not come;
 And take thy way where yet thou art not known,
 If for thy Father askt, say, thou hadst none:
 And for thy Mother, she alas is poor,
 Which caus'd her thus to send thee out of door.

BENJAMIN TOMPSON

1642 - 1714

Tompson, the first native-born New England poet, was a Harvard graduate and by profession a schoolmaster. One of his pupils at the Boston grammar school was Cotton Mather, who refers to him as "a good poet." For biography and criticism, see the excellent edition of Howard J. Hall, *Benjamin Tompson: His Poems* (1924). *New-Englands Crisis* (1676) is a versified account of King Philip's War, which many thought God had inflicted upon the colonists on account of their sins. The Prologue pictures the second generation of Puritans, which was distinctly more secular in its interests than the first.

PROLOGUE TO NEW-ENGLANDS CRISIS (1676)

The times wherein old *Pompion*¹ was a Saint,
 When men far'd hardly yet without complaint
 On vilest *Cates*,² the dainty *Indian Maize*
 Was eat with *Clamp-shells* out of wooden Trays
 Under thatcht *Hutts* without the cry of *Rent*,
 And the best *Sawce* to every Dish, *Content*.

¹ Pumpkin.

² Cakes.

When Flesh was food, & hairy skins made coats,
 And men as wel as birds had chirping Notes.
 When *Cinnels*³ were accounted noble bloud
 Among the tribes of common herbage food.
 5 Of *Ceres* bounty form'd was many a knack
 Enough to fill poor *Robins Almanack*.
 These golden times (too fortunate to hold)
 Were quickly sin'd away for love of gold.
 Twas then among the bushes, not the street
 10 If one in place did an inferiour meet,
 Good morrow Brother, is there ought you want?

³ Cymplings; squashes.

Take freely of me, what I have you ha'nt.
 Plain *Tom* and *Dick* would pass as currant now,
 As ever since *Your Servant Sir* and bow.
 Deep-skirted doublets, *puritanick* capes
 Which now would render men like upright Apes, 5
 Was comlier wear our wiser Fathers thought
 Than the cast fashions from all *Europe* brought.
 Twas in those dayes an honest *Grace* would hold
 Till an hot puddin grew at heart a cold.
 And men had better stomachs to religion 10
 Than I to capon, turkey-cock or pigeon.
 When honest Sisters met to pray not prate
 About their own and not their neighbours state.
 During *Plain Dealings* Reign, that worthy Stud⁴
 Of th' ancient planters race before the flood
 These times were good, Merchants car'd not a
 rush

For other fare than *Jonakin*⁵ and *Mush*.
 Although men far'd and lodgèd very hard
 Yet Innocence was better than a Guard. 20
 Twas long before spiders & wormes had drawn
 Their dungy webs or hid with cheating Lawne
New-Englands beautyes, which stil seem'd to me
 Illustrious in their own simplicity.
 Twas ere the neighbouring *Virgin-land*⁶ had 25
 broke

The Hogheads of her worse than hellish smoak.
 Twas ere the Islands sent their Presents in,
 Which but to use was counted next to sin.
 Twas ere a *Barge* had made so rich a freight
 As *Chocolatte*, dust-gold and bitts of eight. 30
 Ere wines from *France* and *Moscovadoe*⁷ too
 Without the which the drink will scarcely doe,
 From western Isles, ere fruits and dilcacies,
 Did rot maids teeth & spoil their handsome faces. 35
 Or ere these times did chance the noise of war
 Was from our towns and hearts removed far.
 No Bugbear Comets in the chrystal air
 To drive our christian Planters to despair.
 No sooner pagan⁸ malice peepèd forth
 But Valour snib'd it; then were men of worth
 Who by their prayers slew thousands Angel like,
 Their weapons are unseen, with which they
 strike.

Then had the Churches rest, as yet the coales
 Were covered up in most contentious souls.
 Freeness in Judgment, union in affection,

⁴ Sir.

⁵ Johnny-cake.

⁶ Virginia.

⁷ Unrefined sugar.

⁸ Indian.

Dear love, sound truth they were our grand
 protection[.]

These were the twins which in our Councells sate,
 These gave prognosticks of our future fate,
 If these be longer liv'd our hopes increase, 5
 These warrs will usher in a longer peace:
 But if *New-Englands* love die in its youth
 The grave will open next for blessed Truth.
 This *Theame* is out of date, the peacefull hours
 When Castles needed not but pleasant bowers. 10
 Not ink, but bloud and tears now serve the turn
 To draw the figures of *New-Englands* Urne.
New Englands hour of passion is at hand,
 No power except Divine can it withstand;
 Scarce hath her glass of fifty years run out, 15
 But her old prosperous Steeds turn heads about,
 Tracking themselves back to their poor begin-
 nings,
 To fear and fare upon their fruits of sinnings:
 So that the mirrour of the Christian world 20
 Lyes burnt to heaps in part, her Streamers furl'd
 Grief reigns, joyes flee and dismal fears surprize,
 Not dastard spirits only but the wise.
 Thus have the fairest hopes deceiv'd the eye
 Of the big swoln Expectant standing by. 25
 Thus the proud Ship after a little turn
 Sinks into *Neptunes* arms to find its Urn.
 Thus hath the heir to many thousands born
 Benn in an instant from the mother torn. 30
 Ev'n thus thine infant cheeks begin to pale,
 And thy supporters through great losses fail.
 This is the *Prologue* to thy future woe,
 The *Epilogue* no mortal yet can know.

35 "I FEEL THIS WORLD TOO MEAN, AND LOW"

(1713)

In the Tompson manuscript appears the following
 note. "The following Verses were made by Mr Ben-
 jamin Tompson Roxbury, June 20th. 1713 being
 some of his last lines."

I feel this World too mean, and low.
 Patron's a lie: Friendship a Show
 Preferment trouble: Grandure Vaine
 Law a pretence: a Bubble Gainè
 Merit a flash: A Blaze Esteem
 Promise a Rush: and Hope a Dream
 Faith a Disguise: a Truth Deceit
 Wealth but a Trap: and Health a Cheat
 50 These dangerous Rocks, Lord help me shun
 Age tells me my Days work is done.

MICHAEL WIGGLESWORTH

1631 - 1705

Wigglesworth was born in England, brought to New England as a boy, and educated at Harvard College, where he was a tutor for a time. He became a minister, preaching at Malden, but for a long time ill health interfered with his work. His poetic aims are obviously didactic; if he could not preach the orthodox Calvinistic theology of his time, he could write it in verse that the common people could understand. *The Day of Doom* went through numerous editions; it was perhaps the first American best-seller. The best edition of *The Day of Doom* is that of Kenneth B. Murdock (1929).

[Damnation of the Infants]

from THE DAY OF DOOM (1662)

CLXVI

Rev. 20. 12, 15.
Compared with
Rom. 5. 12, 14 &
9. 11, 13.
Ezek. 18. 2.

Then to the Bar, all they drew near who dy'd in Infancy,
And never had or good or bad effected pers'nally,
But from the womb unto the tomb were straightway carried,
(Or at the least e're they transgrest) who thus began to plead:

5

CLXVII

If for our own transgression, or disobedience,
We here did stand at thy left-hand, just were the Recompence:
But *Adam's* guilt our souls hath split, his fault is charg'd [up]on us;
And that alone hath overthrown and utterly undone us.

10

CLXVIII

Not we, but he, ate of the Tree, whose fruit was interdicted:
Yet on us all of his sad Fall, the punishment's inflicted.
How could we sin that had not been or how is his sin our,
Without consent, which to prevent, we never had a pow'r?

15

CLXIX

O great Creator, why was our Nature depravèd and forlorn?
Why so defil'd, and made so vild whilst we were yet unborn?

20

Psal. 51. 5. If it be just, and needs we must transgressors reck'ned be,
Thy Mercy, Lord, to us afford, which sinners hath set free.

CLXX

5

Behold we see *Adam* set free, and sav'd from his trespass,
Whose sinful Fall hath split us all, and brought us to this pass.
Canst thou deny us once to try, or Grace to us to tender,
When he finds grace before thy face, that was the chief offender?

10

CLXXI

Their argument
taken off
Ezek. 18. 20.
Rom. 5. 12, 19
Then answered the Judge most dread, God doth such doom forbid,
That men should dye eternally for what they never did.
But what you call old *Adam's* Fall, and only his Trespass,
You call amiss to call it his, both his and yours it was.

15

CLXXII

I Cor. 15. 48, 49.
He was design'd of all Mankind to be a publick Head,
A common Root, whence all should shoot, and stood in all their stead.
He stood and fell, did ill or well, not for himself alone,
But for you all, who now his Fall, and trespass would disown.

20

25

CLXXIII

If he had stood, then all his brood had been establishèd
In God's true love, never to move, nor once awry to tread.
Then all his Race, my Father's Grace, should have enjoy'd for ever,
And wicked Sprights by subtile sleights could them have harmèd never.

30

CLXXIV

Would you have griev'd to have receiv'd through *Adam* so much good,
As had been your for evermore, if he at first had stood?
Would you have said, we ne'r obey'd, nor did thy Laws regard;
It ill befits with benefits, us, Lord, so to reward,

35

CLXXV

40

Rom. 5. 12.
Psa. 51. 5.
Gen. 5. 3.
Since then to share in his welfare, you could have been content,
You may with reason share in his treason, and in the punishment.
Hence you were born in state forlorn, with Natures so depraved:
Death was your due, because that you had thus your selves behaved.

45

CLXXVI

Mat. 23. 30, 31.
You think if we had been as he, whom God did so betrust,
We to our cost would ne're have lost all for a paltry Lust.
Had you been made in *Adam's* stead, you would like things have wrought,
And so into the self-same wo, your selves and yours have brought.

50

CLXXVII

Rom. 9 15, 18.
The free gift.
Rom 5 15.

I may deny you once to try, or Grace to you to tender,
Though he finds Grace before my face, who was the chief offender:
Else should my Grace cease to be Grace, for it would not be free,
If to release whom I should please, I have no libertee. 5

CLXXVIII

If upon one what's due to none I frankly shall bestow,
And on the rest shall not think best, compassions skirts to throw. 10
Whom injure I? will you envy, and grudge at others weal?
Or me accuse, who do refuse your selves to help and heal.

CLXXIX

Mat. 20. 15.

Am I alone of what's my own, no Master or no Lord? 15
And if I am, how can you claim what I to some afford?
Will you demand Grace at my hand, and challenge what is mine?
Will you teach me whom to set free, & thus my Grace confine?

CLXXX

Psa. 58. 8.
Ro. 6 23.
Gal. 3 10.
Rom. 8. 29, 30,
& 11.7.
Rev. 21. 27.
Luk. 12. 14, 8.
Mat. 11. 22.

You sinners are, and such a share as sinners may expect,
Such you shall have; for I do save none but mine own Elect. 20
Yet to compare your sin with their, who liv'd a longer time,
I do confess yours is much less, though every sin's a crime. 25

CLXXXI

*The wicked all
convinced and
put to silence.*
Ro. 3. 19.
Mat. 22. 12.
*Behold the for-
midable estate of
all the ungodly,
as they stand
hopeless & help-
less before an
impartial Judge,
expecting their
final Sentence.*
Rev. 6. 16, 17.

A crime it is, therefore in bliss you may not hope to dwell;
But unto you I shall allow the easiest room in Hell. 30
The glorious King thus answering, they cease, and plead no longer:
Their Consciences must needs confess his Reasons are the stronger.

CLXXXII

Thus all men's Please the Judge with ease doth answer and confute, 35
Until that all, both great and small, are silenced and mute.
Vain hopes are cropt, all mouths are stopt, sinners have naught to say,
But that 'tis just, and equal most they should be damn'd for ay.

JOHN COTTON(?)

BACON'S EPITAPH, MADE BY HIS MAN

(1676?; 1814)

The following poem is taken from "The Burwell Papers," a contemporary account of Bacon's Rebellion first published by the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1814 and republished much more accurately in 1866. The author of the prose narrative is believed to be a Virginia planter, John Cotton, who may have witnessed some of the stirring scenes which he describes. He included two poems which express diametrically opposite estimates of Bacon's character. The editor of this volume believes that Cotton was the author of both poems. In "The Burwell Papers" "Bacon's Epitaph" is vaguely ascribed to "the Man that waited upon his [Bacon's] person, as it is said. . . ." While Governor Berkeley was hanging many of Bacon's followers, it was not safe for the poet to admit that he had written a poem in praise of the rebel. The poem is in the manner of the so-called Metaphysical School, of which John Donne is the best English example and Edward Taylor the best American. In poetic quality "Bacon's Epitaph" is superior to almost all verse written by Americans before the Revolution. See Jay B. Hubbell, "John and Ann Cotton, of 'Queen's Creek,' Virginia," *American Literature*, X, 179-201 (May, 1938).

Death, why soc crewill! what no other way
To manifest thy splleene,¹ but thus to slay
Our hopes of safety; liberty, our all
Which, through thy tyranny, with him must fall
To its late Caoss? Had thy riged force
Bin delt by retale, and not thus in gross
Grief had bin silent: Now wee must complaine
Since thou, in him, hast more then thousand
 slane
Whose lives and safetys did so much depend
On him, their lif, with him their lives must end.
If't be a sin to think Death brib'd can bee
Wee must be guilty; say twas bribery
Guided the fatall shaft. Verginias foes

¹ Spleen; anger.

To whom for secret crimes just vengeance owes
Disarv'd plagues, dreding their just disart
Corrupted Death by Parasscelician² art
Him to destroy; whose well tride curage such,
5 There heartless harts, nor arms, nor strength
 could touch.

Who now must heale those wounds, or stop
 that blood
The Heathen made, and drew into a flood?
10 Who i't must pleade our Cause? nor Trump nor
 Drum
Nor Deputations; these alas are dumb.
And Cannot speake. Our Arms (though nere so
 strong)

15 Will want the aide of his Commanding tongue,
Which Conquer'd more than Ceaser: He ore-
 threw

Onely the outward frame; this Could subdue
The ruged workes of nature. Souls repleate
20 With dull Child³ could, he'd annemate with
 heate

Drawne forth of reasons Lymbick.⁴ In a word
Marss and *Minerva*, both in him Concurd
For arts, for arms, whose pen and sword alike
25 As *Catos* did, may admiration⁵ strike
Into his foes; while they confess with all
It was their guilt stil'd him a Criminall.
Onely this differance does from truth proceed
They in the guilt, he in the name must bleed.
30 While none shall dare his *Obseques* to sing
In deserv'd measures; untill time shall bring
Truth Crown'd with freedom, and from danger
 free

To sound his praises to posterity.
35 Here let him rest; while wee this truth report
Hee's gone from hence unto a higher Court
To pleade his Cause: where he by this doth know
WHETHER TO CEASER HEE WAS FRIEND, OR FOE.

² Paracelsus (1493-1541) was a magician.

³ Chill cold.

⁴ Alembic, an apparatus used in distillation.

⁵ Wonder; amazement.

EDWARD TAYLOR

1644? - 1729

Edward Taylor, who was born in or near Coventry, came to Boston in July, 1668, as a young man of twenty-two or twenty-three. He brought with him letters of introduction and was cordially received by Increase Mather and President Chauncy of Harvard College. Taylor completed his education at Harvard and for two years roomed with Samuel Sewall, author of the well-known diary. Soon after graduation, Taylor took charge of the congregation in the frontier village of Westfield, Massachusetts, where he remained until his death in 1729. His grandson Ezra Stiles described him as "A man of small stature but firm; of quick Passions—yet serious and grave." Samuel Sewall once remarked: "I have heard him preach a Sermon at the Old South [Church] upon short warning which as the phrase in England is, might have been preached at Paul's Cross." Taylor left behind a good private library, but the only book of English verse listed was a volume of poems by Anne Bradstreet.

Among Taylor's effects there was a manuscript book of his poems (now in the Yale University Library) extending to four hundred pages. He stipulated that his heirs should not publish any of his writings. The poems remained unknown to scholars until June, 1937, when Thomas H. Johnson published selections in an article in the *New England Quarterly* entitled "Edward Taylor: A Puritan 'Sacred Poet.'" In 1939 Mr. Johnson brought out a volume, *The Poetical Works of Edward Taylor*, which contains the best but by no means all of Taylor's poems. Scholars quickly recognized their historical and intrinsic importance. The bulk of the published poems fall into two main divisions: "Sacramental Meditations" and "Gods Determinations Touching His Elect: And the Elects Combat in Their Conversion, and Coming Up to God in Christ: Together with the Comfortable Effects Thereof." Taylor's poems do not resemble those of his great contemporary John Dryden but hark back to the poetry of the English Metaphysicals, especially George Herbert and John Donne. "His sole inspiration," writes Mr. Johnson, "was a glowing, passionate love for Christ, expressed in terms of his own unworthiness and wistful yearning." The poems are characterized by metrical roughness and elaborate figures of speech. The current interest in metaphysical poetry—seen in the writings of T. S. Eliot, for instance—has made it easier for readers of the present to appreciate Taylor's poems.

The chief sources of information are the two works by Thomas H. Johnson already listed and two other articles by him: "Some Edward Taylor Gleanings," *New England Quarterly*, XVI, 280-296 (June, 1943), and "The Topical Verses of Edward Taylor," *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, XXXIV, 513-554 (1943). See also "Diary of Edward Taylor," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, XVIII, 4-18 (1881); Wallace

Cable Brown, "Edward Taylor: An American 'Metaphysical,'" *American Literature*, XVI, 186-197 (November, 1944); Austin Warren, "Edward Taylor's Poetry: Colonial Baroque," *Kenyon Review*, III, 355-371 (Summer, 1941); Willie T. Weathers, "Edward Taylor, Hellenistic Puritan," *American Literature*, XVIII, 18-26 (March, 1946); and Nathalia Wright, "The Morality Tradition in the Poetry of Edward Taylor," *American Literature*, XVIII, 1-17 (March, 1946).

PROLOGUE TO GODS
"DETERMINATIONS TOUCHING HIS ELECT"*

(1939)

Lord, Can a Crumb of Earth the Earth outweigh:
Outmatch all mountains, nay the Chrystall Sky?
Imbosom in't designs that shall Display
And trace into the Boundless Deity?
Yea, hand a Pen whose moisture doth guild ore 5
Eternall Glory with a glorious gloire.

If it its Pen had of an Angels Quill,
And sharpend on a Pretious Stone ground tite,
And dipt in Liquid Gold, and mov'de by skill 10
In Christall leaves should golden Letters write,
It would but blot and blur: yea, jag and jar,
Unless thou mak'st the Pen and Scribener.¹

I am this Crumb of Dust which is design'd 15
To make my Pen unto they Praise alone,
And my dull Phancy I would gladly grinde
Unto an Edge on Zions Pretious Stone:
And Write in Liquid Gold upon thy Name
My Letters till thy glory forth doth flame. 20

Let not th' attempts breake down my Dust I pray,
Nor laugh thou them to scorn, but pardon give.
Inspire this Crumb of Dust till it display
Thy Glory through 't: and then thy dust shall live. 25
Its failings then thou'lt overlook I trust,
They being Slips slipt from thy Crumb of Dust.

Thy Crumb of Dust breaths two words from its breast;
That thou wilt guide its pen to write aright 30
To Prove thou art, and that thou art the best,
And shew thy Properties to shine most bright.
And then thy Works will shine as flowers on Stems,
Or as in Jewellary Shops, do jems.

* The selections from Taylor are reprinted by permission from *The Poetical Works of Edward Taylor*, edited by Thomas H. Johnson and now published by Princeton University Press.

¹ Scrivener; writer.

MEDITATION ONE

(1682)

What love is this of thine, that Cannot bee
In thine Infinity, O Lord, Confinde,
Unless it in thy very Person see
Infinity and Finity Conjoyn'd?
What! hath thy Godhead, as not satisfi'de,
Marri'de our Manhood, making it its Bride?

Oh, Matchless Love! Filling Heaven to the brim!
O'rerunning it: all running o're beside
This World! Nay, Overflowing Hell, wherein
For thine Elect, there rose a mighty Tide!
That there our Veans might through thy
Person bleed,
To quench those flames, that else would on us
feed.

Oh! that thy love might overflow my Heart!
To fire the same with Love: for Love I would.
But oh! my streight'ned Breast! my Lifeless
Sparkel!
My Fireless Flame! What Chilly Love, and
Cold?
In measure small! In Manner Chilly! See!
Lord, blow the Coal: Thy Love Enflame in
mee.

Pour'de out to God over last Sacrament.
What Beam of Light wrapt up my sight to
finde
Me neerer God than ere Came in my minde?
5 Most strange it was! But yet more strange that
shine
Which fill'd my Soul then to the brim to spy
My nature with thy Nature all Divine
10 Together joyn'd in Him that's Thou, and I.
Flesh of my Flesh, Bone of my Bone: there's
run
Thy Godhead and my Manhood in thy Son.
15 Oh! that that Flame which thou didst on me Cast
Might me enflame, and Lighten ery where.
Then Heaven to me would be less at last,
So much of heaven I should have while here.
Oh! Sweet though Short! I'll not forget the
same.
20 My neerness, Lord, to thee did me Enflame.
I'll Claim my Right: Give place ye Angells
Bright.
25 Ye further from the Godhead stande than I.
My Nature is your Lord; and doth Unite
Better than Yours unto the Deity.
God's Throne is first and mine is next: to you
Onely the place of Waiting-men is due.

THE EXPERIENCE

(1682-3)

Canticles I:3. . . thy name is as ointment poured
forth.

Oh, that I alwayes breath'd in such an aire
As I suck't in, feeding on sweet Content!
Disht up unto my Soul ev'n in that pray're

30 Oh! that my Heart, thy Golden Harp might bee
Well tun'd by Glorious Grace, that e'ry string
Screw'd to the highest pitch, might unto thee
All Praises wrapt in sweetest Musick bring.
35 I praise thee, Lord, and better praise thee
would,
If what I had, my heart might ever hold.

HUSWIFERY

(about 1685?)

Make me, O Lord, thy Spin[n]ing Wheele compleat;
Thy Holy Worde my Distaff make for mee.
Make mine Affections thy Swift Flyers neate,
And make my Soule thy holy Spoole to bee.
5 My Conversation make to be thy Reelee,
And reele the yarn thereon spun of thy Wheele.

Make me thy Loom then, knit therein this Twine:
And make thy Holy Spirit, Lord, winde quills:
10 Then weave the Web thyselfe. The yarn is fine.
Thine Ordinances make my Fulling Mills.
Then dy the same in Heavenly Colours Choice,
All pinkt with Varnish't Flowers of Paradise.

Then cloath therewith mine Understanding, Will,
 Affections, Judgment, Conscience, Memory;
 My Words and Actions, that their shine may fill
 My wayes with glory and thee glorify.
 Then mine apparell shall display before yee
 That I am Cloathd in Holy robes for glory. 5

MEDITATION EIGHT

(1704) 10

John VI 51. I am the living bread.

I ken[n]ing through Astronomy Divine
 The Worlds bright Battlement, wherein I spy
 A Golden Path my Pensill cannot line 15
 From that bright Throne unto my Threshold ly.
 And while my puzzled thoughts about it pore,
 I find the Bread of Life in't at my doore.

When that this Bird of Paradise put in 20
 The Wicker Cage (my Corps) to tweedle praise
 Had peckt the Fruite forbid: and so did fling
 Away its Food, and lost its golden dayes,
 It fell into Celestiall Famine sore,
 And never could attain a morsell more. 25

Alas! alas! Poore Bird, what wilt thou doe?
 This Creatures field no food for Souls e're gave:
 And if thou knock at Angells dores, they show
 An Empty Barrell: they no soul bread have. 30
 Alas! Poore Bird, the Worlds White Loafe is done,
 And cannot yield thee here the smallest Crumb.

In this sad state, Gods Tender Bowells run
 Out streams of Grace: And he to end all strife, 35
 The Purest Wheate in Heaven, his deare-dear Son
 Grinds, and kneads up into this Bread of Life:
 Which Bread of Life from Heaven down came and stands
 Disht on thy Table up by Angells Hands. 40

Did God mould up this Bread in Heaven, and bake,
 Which from his Table came, and to thine goeth?
 Doth he bespeake thee thus: This Soule Bread take;
 Come, Eat thy fill of this, thy Gods White Loafe?
 Its Food too fine for Angells; yet come, take 45
 And Eat thy fill! Its Heavens Sugar Cake.

What Grace is this knead in this Loafe? This thing
 Souls are but petty things it to admire.
 Yee Angells, help: This fill would to the brim 50
 Heav'ns whelm'd-down Chrystall meeke Bowle, yea and higher.
 This Bread of Life dropt in thy mouth doth Cry:
 Eat, Eat me, Soul, and thou shalt never dy.

MEDITATION THIRTY-EIGHT

(1690)

John II:1. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father.

Oh! What a thing is Man? Lord, Who am I?
That thou shouldst give him Law (Oh! golden
Line)

To regulate his Thoughts, Words, Life thereby.
And judge him wilt thereby too in thy time.
A Court of Justice thou in heaven holdst,
To try his Case while he's here housd on
mould.

How do thy Angells lay before thine eye
My Deeds both White and Black I dayly doe?
How doth thy Court thou Pannellst there them
try?

But flesh complains. What right for this? let's
know!

For right or wrong, I can't appeare unto't.
And shall a sentence Pass on such a suite?

Soft; blemish not this golden Bench, or place.
There is no Bribe, nor Colourings to hide,
Nor Pettifogger to befog the Case;

But Justice hath her Glory here well tri'de:
Her spotless Law all spotted Cases tends;
Without Respect or Disrespect them ends,

God's Judge himselfe, and Christ Attorny is;
The Holy Ghost Regesterer is founde.

Angells the sergeants are, all Creatures kiss
The booke, and doe as Evidence abounde.

5 All Cases pass according to pure Law,
And in the sentence is no Fret nor flaw.

What saith, my soule? Here all thy Deeds are
tri'de.

10 Is Christ thy Advocate to pleade thy Cause?
Art thou his Client? Such shall never slide.
He never lost his Case. he pleads such Laws
As Carry do the same, nor doth refuse
The Vilest sinners Case that doth him Choose.

15 This is his Honour, not Dishonour: nay,
No Habeas-Corpus 'gainst his Clients came;
For all their Fines his Purse doth make down pay
He Non-Suites Satan's suite or Casts the same.
20 He'l plead thy Case, and not accept a Fee.
He'l plead Sub Forma Pauperis for thee.

My Case is bad. Lord, be my Advocate.
My sin is red: I'me under Gods Arrest.

25 Thou hast the Hit of Pleading; plead my state.
Although it's bad, thy Plea will make it best.
If thou wilt plead my Case before the King,
I'll Waggon Loads of Love and Glory bring.

COTTON MATHER

1663 - 1728

I write the WONDERS of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, flying from the depravations of Europe, to the American Strand; and, assisted by the Holy Author of that Religion, I do with all conscience of Truth, required therein by Him, who is the Truth itself, report the wonderful displays of His infinite Power, Wisdom, Goodness, and Faithfulness, wherewith His Divine Providence hath irradiated an Indian Wilderness.

—COTTON MATHER, Introduction to *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702).

Cotton Mather, the son of Increase Mather, was a precocious child who became a prodigy of learning. He entered Harvard College at the age of eleven and took his bachelor's degree

at fifteen. At eighteen he became assistant to his father, who was pastor of the North Church in Boston. He fought the growing tendency toward liberalism in matters of religion. He had hoped to become President of Harvard College, but he lived to see his father removed from that position when the College came into the control of more liberal men. Mather was immensely learned and owned a library which rivaled that of William Byrd—a man of a totally different stamp. He was interested in science and was a fellow of the Royal Society. He was, however, active in the persecution of the witches. Of his voluminous writings, perhaps the most important are *The Wonders of the Invisible World* (1693), *Essays to Do Good* (1710), which influenced Franklin, and *Magnalia Christi Americana: or, the Ecclesiastical History of New England* (1702). In the last-named book Mather laments the passing of the great period in New England when men were filled with religious zeal and the clergy ruled the colony. The best life of Cotton Mather is by Barrett Wendell (1891); see also Kenneth B. Murdock's *Increase Mather* (1925) and *Selections from the Works of Cotton Mather* (1926). In 1940 Thomas J. Holmes brought out a three-volume bibliography of Mather's numerous writings.

**THE LIFE OF WILLIAM
BRADFORD, ESQ., GOVERNOR OF
PLYMOUTH COLONY**

from MAGNALIA CHRISTI
AMERICANA (1702)

§2. Among those Devout People was our *William Bradford*, who was Born *Anno* 1588. in an obscure Village call'd *Austerfield*, where the People were as unacquainted with the *Bible*, as the *Jews* do seem to have been with *part* of it in the Days of *Josiah*; a most Ignorant and Licentious People, and like unto their Priest. Here, and in some other Places, he had a Comfortable *Inheritance* left him of his Honest Parents, who died while he was yet a Child, and cast him on the Education, first of his *Grand Parents*, and then of his *Uncles*, who devoted him, like his Ancestors, unto the Affairs of *Husbandry*. Soon a long Sickness kept him, as he would afterwards thankfully say, from the *Vanities of Youth*, and made him the fitter for what he was afterwards to undergo. When he was about a Dozen Years Old, the Reading of the *Scriptures* began to cause great Impressions upon him; and those Impressions were much assisted and improved, when he came to enjoy Mr. *Richard Clifton's* Illuminating Ministry, not far from his Abode; he was

then also further befriended, by being brought into the Company and Fellowship of such as were then called *Professors*; though the Young Man that brought him into it, did after become a Prophan and Wicked *Apostate*. Nor could the *Wrath* of his *Uncles*, nor the Scoff of his *Neighbours* now turn'd upon him, as one of the *Puritans*, divert him from his Pious Inclinations.

§3. At last beholding how fearfully the Evangelical and Apostolical *Church-Form*, whereinto the Churches of the *Primitive Times* were cast by the good Spirit of God, had been *Deformed* by the *Apostacy* of the *Succeeding Times*; and what little Progress the *Reformation* had yet made in many Parts of *Christendom* towards its Recovery, he set himself by Reading, by Discourse, by Prayer, to learn whether it was not his Duty to *withdraw* from the Communion of the *Parish-Assemblies*, and *engage* with some *Society* of the Faithful, that should keep close unto the *Written Word* of God, as the *Rule* of their *Worship*. And after many Distresses of Mind concerning it, he took up a very Deliberate and Understanding *Resolution* of doing so; which *Resolution* he cheerfully Prosecuted, although the provoked *Rage* of his Friends tried all the ways imaginable to reclaim him from it, unto all whom his Answer was, *Were I like to endanger*

my Life, or consume my Estate by any ungodly Courses, your Counsels to me were very seasonable: But you know that I have been Diligent and Provident in my Calling, and not only desirous to augment what I have, but also to enjoy it in your Company; to part from which will be as great a Cross as can befall me. Nevertheless, to keep a good Conscience, and walk in such a Way as God has prescribed in his Word, is a thing which I must prefer before you all, and above Life it self. Wherefore, since 'tis for a good Cause that I am like to suffer the Disasters which you lay before me, you have no Cause to be either angry with me, or sorry for me; yea, I am not only willing to part with every thing that is dear to me in this World for this Cause, but I am also thankful that God has given me an Heart so to do, and will accept me so to suffer for him. Some lamented him, some derided him, all dissuaded him: Nevertheless the more they did it, the more fixed he was in his Purpose to seek the Ordinances of the Gospel, where they should be dispensed with most of the Commanded Purity; and the sudden Deaths of the chief Relations which thus lay at him, quickly after convinced him what a Folly it had been to have quitted his Profession, in Expectation of any Satisfaction from them. So to Holland he attempted a removal.

§4. Having with a great Company of Christians Hired a Ship to Transport them for Holland, the Master perfidiously betrayed them into the Hands of those Persecutors, who Rifled and Ransack'd their Goods, and clapp'd their Persons into Prison at Boston,¹ where they lay for a Month together. But Mr. Bradford being a Young Man of about Eighteen, was dismissed sooner than the rest, so that within a while he had Opportunity with some others to get over to Zealand, through Perils both by Land and Sea not inconsiderable; where he was not long Ashore e're a Viper seized on his Hand, that is, an Officer, who carried him unto the Magistrates, unto whom an envious Passenger had accused him as having fled out of England. When the Magistrates understood the True Cause of his coming thither, they were well satisfied with him; and so he repaired joyfully unto his Brethren at Amsterdam, where the Difficulties to which he afterwards stooped in Learning and Serving of a Frenchman at the Working of Silks, were abundantly

Compensated by the Delight wherewith he sat under the Shadow of our Lord in his purely dispensed Ordinances. At the end of Two Years, he did, being of Age to do it, convert his Estate in England into Money; but Setting up for himself, he found some of his Designs by the Providence of God frowned upon, which he judged a Correction bestowed by God upon him for certain Decays of Internal Piety, whereinto he had fallen; the Consumption of his Estate he thought came to prevent a Consumption in his Virtue. But after he had resided in Holland about half a Score Years, he was one of those who bore a part in that Hazardous and Generous Enterprize of removing into New-England, with part of the English Church at Leyden, where at their first Landing, his dearest Consort accidentally falling Overboard, was drowned in the Harbour; and the rest of his Days were spent in the Services, and the Temptations, of that American Wilderness.

§5. Here was Mr. Bradford in the Year 1621, unanimously chosen the Governour of the Plantation: The Difficulties whereof were such, that if he had not been a Person of more than Ordinary Piety, Wisdom and Courage, he must have sunk under them. He had with a Laudable Industry been laying up a Treasure of Experiences, and he had now occasion to use it: Indeed nothing but an Experienced Man could have been suitable to the Necessities of the People. The Potent Nations of the Indians, into whose Country they were come, would have cut them off, if the Blessing of God upon his Conduct had not quell'd them; and if his Prudence, Justice and Moderation had not over-ruled them, they had been ruined by their own Distempers. One Specimen of his Demeanour is to this Day particularly spoken of. A Company of Young Fellows that were newly arrived, were very unwilling to comply with the Governour's Order for Working abroad on the Publick Account; and therefore on Christmas-Day, when he had called upon them, they excused themselves, with a pretence that it was against their Conscience to Work such a Day. The Governour gave them no Answer, only that he would spare them till they were better informed; but by and by he found them all at Play in the Street, sporting themselves with various Diversions; whereupon Commanding the Instruments of their Games to be taken from them, he effectually gave them to

¹ This is Boston in England.

understand, *That it was against his Conscience that they should play whilst others were at Work, and that if they had any Devotion to the Day, they should show it at Home in the Exercises of Religion, and not in the Streets with Pastime and Frolics*; and this gentle Reproof put a final stop to all such Disorders for the future.

§6. For Two Years together after the beginning of the Colony, whereof he was now Governour, the poor People had a great Experiment of *Man's not living by Bread alone*; for when they were left all together without one Morsel of Bread for many Months one after another, still the good Providence of God relieved them, and supplied them, and thus for the most part out of the Sea. In this low Condition of Affairs, there was no little Exercise for the *Prudence and Patience* of the Governour, who chearfully bore his part in all; And that *Industry* might not flag, he quickly set himself to settle *Propriety* among the New-Planters; foreseeing that while the whole Country labour'd upon a *Common Stock*, the *Husbandry and Business* of the Plantation could not flourish, as *Plato* and others long since dream'd that it would, if a *Community* were established. Certainly, if the Spirit which dwelt in the *Old Puritans*, had not inspired these *New-Planters*, they had sunk under the Burden of these Difficulties; but our *Bradford* had a double Portion of that Spirit.

§7. The Plantation was quickly thrown into a Storm that almost overwhelmed it, by the unhappy Actions of a Minister sent over from *England* by the *Adventurers* concerned for the Plantation; but by the Blessing of Heaven on the Conduct of the Governour, they Weathered out that Storm. Only the *Adventurers* hereupon breaking to pieces, threw up all their Concernments with the *Infant Colony*; whereof they gave this as one Reason. *That the Planters dissembled with His Majesty, and their Friends in their Petition, wherein they declared for a Church-Discipline, agreeing with the French and others of the Reforming Churches in Europe*. Whereas 'twas now urged, that they had admitted into their Communion a Person, who at his Admission utterly renounced the Churches of *England*, (which Person by the way, was that very Man who had made the Complaints against them) and therefore though they denied the Name of *Brownists*, yet they were the Thing. In Answer

hereunto, the very Words written by the Governour were these; *Whereas you Tax us with dissembling about the French Discipline, you do us wrong, for we both hold and practice the Discipline of the French and other Reformed Churches (as they have published the same in the Harmony of Confessions) according to our Means, in Effect and Substance. But whereas you would tie us up to the French Discipline in every Circumstance, you derogate from the Liberty we have in Christ Jesus. The Apostle Paul would have none to follow him in any thing, but wherein he follows Christ; much less ought any Christian or Church in the World to do it. The French may err, we may err, and other Churches may err, and doubtless do in many Circumstances. That Honour therefore belongs only to the Infallible Word of God, and pure Testament of Christ, to be propounded and followed as the only Rule and Pattern for Direction herein to all Churches and Christians. And it is too great Arrogancy for any Man or Church to think, that he or they have so sounded the Word of God unto the bottom, as precisely to set down the Churches Discipline without Error in Substance or Circumstance, that no other without blame may digress or differ in any thing from the same. And it is not difficult to shew that the Reformed Churches differ in many Circumstances among themselves*. By which Words it appears how far he was free from that *Rigid Spirit of Separation*, which broke to pieces the *Separatists* themselves in the *Low Countries*, unto the great Scandal of the *Reforming Churches*. He was indeed a Person of a *well-temper'd Spirit*, or else it had been scarce possible for him to have kept the Affairs of *Plymouth* in so good a Temper for *Thirty Seven Years* together; in every one of which he was chosen their Governour, except the *Three Years*, wherein Mr. *Winslow*, and the *Two Years*, wherein Mr. *Prince*, at the choice of the People, took a turn with him.

§8. The Leader of a People in a Wilderness had need be a *Moses*; and if a *Moses* had not led the People of *Plymouth-Colony*, when this Worthy Person was their Governour, the People had never with so much Unanimity and Importunity still called him to lead them. Among many Instances thereof, let this one piece of *Self-denial* be told for a Memorial of him, where-soever this History shall be considered. The Patent of the Colony was taken in his Name,

running in these Terms, *To William Bradford, his Heirs, Associates and Assigns*. But when the number of the *Freemen* was much Increased, and many New *Townships* Erected, the *General Court* there desired of Mr. *Bradford*, that he would make a Surrender of the same into *their Hands*, which he willingly and presently assented unto, and confirmed it according to their Desire by his *Hand and Seal*, reserving no more for himself than was his *Proportion*, with others, by *Agreement*. But as he found the Providence of Heaven many ways *Recompencing* his many Acts of *Self-denial*, so he gave this Testimony to the Faithfulness of the Divine Promises; *That he had forsaken Friends, Houses and Lands for the sake of the Gospel, and the Lord gave them him again*. Here he prospered in his *Estate*; and besides a Worthy Son which he had by a former Wife, he had also Two Sons and a Daughter by another, whom he Married in this Land.

§9. He was a Person for *Study* as well as *Action*; and hence, notwithstanding the Difficulties through which he passed in his Youth, he attained unto a notable Skill in *Languages*; the *Dutch Tongue* was become almost as Vernacular to him as the *English*, the *French Tongue* he could also manage; the *Latin* and the *Greek* he had Mastered; but the *Hebrew* he most of all studied, *Because*, he said, *he would see with his own Eyes the Ancient Oracles of God in their Native Beauty*. He was also well skill'd in *History*, in *Antiquity*, and in *Philosophy*; and for *Theology* he became so versed in it, that he was an *Irrefragable Disputant* against the *Errors*, especially those of *Anabaptism*, which with Trouble he saw rising in his Colony; wherefore

he wrote some Significant things for the Confutation of those Errors But the *Crown* of all was his Holy, Prayerful, Watchful and Fruitful *Walk with God*, wherein he was very Exemplary.

§10. At length he fell into an Indisposition of Body, which rendred him unhealthy for a whole *Winter*; and as the *Spring* advanced, his Health yet more declined; yet he felt himself not what he counted *Sick*, till one *Day*, in the *Night* after which, the God of Heaven so fill'd his Mind with *Ineffable Consolations*, that he seemed little short of *Paul*, rapt up into the *Unutterable* Entertainments of *Paradise*. The next Morning he told his Friends, *That the good Spirit of God had given him a Pledge of his Happiness in another World, and the First-fruits of his Eternal Glory*: And on the Day following he died, *May 9. 1657.* in the 69th Year of his Age—lamented by all the Colonies of *New-England*, as a Common Blessing and Father to them all.

*O mihi si Similis Contingat Clausula Vitæ*¹²

Plato's brief Description of a *Governour*, is all that I will now leave as his Character, in an

E P I T A P H.

Νομὲς Τροφὸς ἀγέλης ἀνθρωπίνης.³

30 *MEN* are but *FLOCKS*: *BRADFORD*
beheld their Need,
And long did them at once both Rule and Feed.

² Oh, that life's end may be as sweet to me! (Author's note.)

35 ³ A shepherd-guardian of his human fold. (Author's note.)

SAMUEL SEWALL

1652 - 1730

Samuel Sewall, one of the most distinguished New Englanders of his time, was born in England but was brought to New England in his youth. He was twice Assistant Governor of the Colony. In 1692 he was chosen Member of the Council and Judge of the Probate Court.

He was the only judge involved in the persecution of witches who publicly confessed his error. For the remainder of his life he set aside every year a day for fasting and prayer for his part in the persecution. In 1700 he published the first American anti-slavery tract, *The Selling of Joseph*. From 1718 to 1728 he was Chief Justice of Massachusetts. His *Diary*, published by the Massachusetts Historical Society (1878-1882) covers the years 1673-1676, 1686-1729. It is one of the most interesting and valuable of Colonial documents. In spite of Sewall's genuine religious feeling, one notes a growing secular tendency in the New England of his time. In Colonial times men and women married early and usually did not long remain unmarried after their partners' deaths. The *Diary* may be conveniently read in an abridged edition (1927) by Mark Van Doren: There is a biography by N. H. Chamberlain (1897).

[The Courting of Madam Winthrop]
(1878-1882)

from his DIARY

May, 26 [1720]. - - - Went to Bed after Ten: about 11 or before, my dear Wife was oppress'd with a rising of Flegm that obstructed her Breathing. I arose and lighted a Candle, made Scipio give me a Bason of Water (he was asleep by the fire) Call'd Philadelphia, Mr. Cooper, Mayhew. About midnight my dear wife¹ expired to our great astonishment, especially mine. May the Sovereign Lord pardon my Sin, and sanctify to me this very Extraordinary, awfull Dispensation. - - -

May, 29. God having in his holy Sovereignty put my Wife out of the Fore-Seat, I apprehended I had Cause to be asham'd of my Sin, and to loath my self for it; and retired into my Pue. Mr. Williams of Derefield preach'd in the morning from Rom. 5. Christ died for Sinners. Mr. Sewall administered the Lords Supper. I put up a Note to this purpose; Samuel Sewall depriv'd of his dear Wife by a very sudden and awfull Stroke, desires Prayers that God would sanctify the same to himself, and Children, and family. Writ and sent three: to the South [Church], Old, and Mr. Colman's. - - -

8^r. [October] 1. Satterday, I dine at Mr. Stoddard's: from thence I went to Madam Winthrop's² just at 3. Spake to her, saying my loving wife died so soon and suddenly, 'twas hardly con-

venient for me to think of Marrying again; however I came to this Resolution, that I would not make my Court to any person without first Consulting with her. - - -

5 Octobr. 3.² Waited on Madam Winthrop again; 'twas a little while before she came in. Her daughter Noyes being there alone with me, I said, I hoped my Waiting on her Mother would not be disagreeable to her. She answer'd she should not be against that that might be for her Comfort. I Saluted her, and told her I perceiv'd I must shortly wish her a good time; (her mother had told me, she was with Child, and within a Moneth or two of her Time). By and by in 15 came Mr. Airs, Chaplain of the Castle, and hang'd up his Hat, which I was a little startled at, it seeming as if he was to lodge there. At last Madam Winthrop came too. After a considerable time, I went up to her and said, if it might not be 20 inconvenient I desired to speak with her. She assented, and spake of going into another Room; but Mr. Airs and Mrs. Noyes presently rose up, and went out, leaving us there alone. Then I 25 usher'd in Discourse from the names in the Fore-seat; at last I pray'd that Katharine [Mrs. Winthrop] might be the person assign'd for me. She instantly took it up in the way of Denyal, as if she had catch'd at an Opportunity to do it, saying she could not do it before she was asked. Said 30 that was her mind unless she should Change it, which she believed she should not; could not leave her Children. I express'd my Sorrow that she should do it so Speedily, pray'd her Consideration, and ask'd her when I should wait on her 35 agen. She setting no time, I mention'd that day Sennight. - - -

¹ This was Sewall's second wife.

² Madam Katherine Winthrop, aged fifty-six, had been twice married. Sewall was in his sixty-ninth year.

8^r. 6th - - - A little after 6 p.m. I went to Madam Winthrop's. - - - Madam seem'd to harp upon the same string. Must take care of her Children; could not leave that House and Neighbourhood where she had dwelt so long I told her she might doe her children as much or more good by bestowing what she laid out in Hous-keeping, upon them. Said her Son would be of Age the 7th of August. I said it might be inconvenient for her to dwell with her Daughter-in-Law, who must be Mistress of the House. I gave her a piece of Mr. Belcher's Cake and Ginger-Bread wrapped up in a clean sheet of Paper; told her of her Father's kindness to me when Treasurer, and I Constable. My Daughter Judith was gon from me and I was more lonesom—might help to forward one another in our Journey to Canaan. - - - I took leave about 9 aclock. I told [her] I came now to refresh her Memory as to Monday-night; said she had not forgot it. - - -

8^r. 10th. - - - In the Evening I visited Madam Winthrop, who treated me with a great deal of Curtesy; Wine, Marmalade. I gave her a News-Letter about the Thanksgiving; - - -

8^r. 11th. I writ a few Lines to Madam Winthrop to this purpose. "Madam, These wait on you with Mr. Mayhew's Sermon, and Account of the state of the Indians on Martha's Vinyard. I thank you for your Unmerited Favours of yesterday; and hope to have the Happiness of Waiting on you to-morrow before Eight aclock after Noon. I pray God to keep you, and give you a joyfull entrance upon the Two Hundred and twenty ninth year of Christopher Columbus his Discovery; and take Leave, who am, Madam, your humble Servt.

S.S. - - -

8^r. 12. - - - Mrs. Anne Cotton came to door (twas before 8.) said Madam Winthrop was within, directed me into the little Room, where she was full of work behind a Stand; Mrs. Cotton came in and stood. Madam Winthrop pointed to her to set me a Chair. Madam Winthrop's Countenance was much changed from what 'twas on Monday, look'd dark and lowering. At last, the work, (black stuff or Silk) was taken away, I got my Chair in place, had some Converse, but very Cold and indifferent to what 'twas before. Ask'd her to acquit me of Rudeness if I drew off her Glove. Enquiring the reason, I told her twas great odds between handling a dead Goat, and a living Lady. Got it off. I told her I had one

Petition to ask of her, that was, that she would take off the Negative she laid on me the third of October: She readily answer'd she could not, and enlarg'd upon it, She told me of it so soon as she could; could not leave her house, children, neighbours, business. I told her she might do some Good to help and support me. Mentioning Mrs. Gookin, Nath, the widow Weld was spoken of; said I had visited Mrs. Denison. I told her Yes! Afterward I said, If after a first and second Vagary she would Accept of me returning, Her Victorious Kindness and Good Will would be very Obliging. She thank'd me for my Book, (Mr. Mayhew's Sermon), But said not a word of the Letter. When she insisted on the Negative, I pray'd there might be no more Thunder and Lightening, I should not sleep all night I gave her Dr. Preston, The Church's Marriage and the Church's Carriage, which cost me 6^s at the Sale. The door standing open, Mr. Airs came in, hung up his Hat, and sat down. After awhile, Madam Winthrop moving, he went out. Jn^o Eyre look'd in, I said How do ye, or, your servant Mr. Eyre: but heard no word from him. Sarah fill'd a Glass of Wine, she drank to me, I to her, She sent Juno home with me with a good Lantern, I gave her 6^d. and bid her thank her Mistress. In some of our Discourse, I told her [Madam Winthrop] I had rather go to the Stone-House adjoining to her, than to come to her against her mind. Told her the reason why I came every other night was lest I should drink too deep draughts of Pleasure. She had talk'd of Canary, her Kisses were to me better than the best Canary. Explain'd the expression Concerning Columbus.

8^r. 16. L [Lord's]. Day, I upbraided my self that could be so solicitous about Earthly things; and so cold and indifferent as to the Love of Christ, who is altogether Lovely. Mr. Prince administred. Din'd at my Son's with Mr. Cutler, and Mr. Shurtleff. Mr. Cutler preaches in the Afternoon from Ezek. 16 30. How weak is thy heart. Son reads the Order for the Thanksgiving.

8^r. 17. - - - In the Evening I visited Madam Winthrop, who Treated me Courteously, but not in Clean Linen as sometimes. She said, she did not know whether I would come again, or no. I ask'd her how she could so impute inconstancy to me. (I had not visited her since Wednesday night being unable to get over the Indisposition received by the Treatment received that night, - - - Gave her this day's Gazett. - - -

8^r. 18. Midweek, Visited Madam Winthrop's;

Sarah told me she was at Mr. Walley's, would not come home till late. --- I went and found her there, with Mr. Walley and his wife in the little Room below. At 7 a'clock I mentioned going home, at 8. I put on my Coat, and quickly waited on her home. She found occasion to speak loud to the servant, as if she had a mind to be known. Was Courteous to me; but took occasion to speak pretty earnestly about my keeping a Coach. I said 'twould cost £100 per annum: she said twould cost but £40. --- Came away somewhat late.

8^r. 20. --- She spake something of my needing a Wigg. ---

8^r. 21. Friday, My Son, the Minister, came to me p. m. by appointment and we pray one for another in the Old Chamber, more especially respecting my Courtship. About 6. a'clock I go to Madam Winthrop's; Sarah told me her Mistress was gon out, but did not tell me whither she went. She presently order'd me a Fire; so I went in, having Dr. Sibb's Bowels with me to read. I read the two first sermons, still no body came in: at last about 9. a'clock Mr. Jn^o Eyre came in; I took the opportunity to say to him as I had done to Mrs. Noyes before, that I hoped my Visiting his Mother would not be disagreeable to him; He answered me with much Respect. When twas after 9. a'clock He of himself said he would go and call her, she was but at one of his Brothers: A while after I heard Madam Winthrop's voice, enquiring something about John. After a good while and Clapping the Garden door twice or thrice, she came in. I mentuon'd something of the lateness; she banter'd me, and said I was later. She receiv'd me Courteously. I ask'd when our proceedings should be made publick: She said They were like to be no more publick than they were already. Offer'd me no Wine that I remember. I rose up at 11 a'clock to come away, saying I would put on my Coat, She offer'd not to help me. I pray'd her that Juno might light me home, she open'd the Shutter, and said twas pretty light abroad; Juno was weary and gon to bed. So I came hòm by Star-light as well as I could, At my first coming in, I gave Sarah five Shillings. I writ Mr. Eyre his Name in his book with the date Octobr. 21. 1720. It cost me 8^s. Jehovah jireh!³ ---

Octobr. 22. Dâter Cooper visited me before my going out of Town, staid till about Sun set. I brought her going near as far as the Orange Tree. Coming back, near Leg's Corner, Little David

³ God will provide.

Jeffries saw me, and looking upon me very lovingly, ask'd me if I was going to see his Grand-mother? I said, Not to-night. Gave him a peny, and bid him present my Service to his Grand-mother.

Octobr. 24. I went in the Hackny Coach through the Common, stop'd at Madam Winthrop's (had told her I would take my departure from thence). Sarah came to the door with Katee in her Arms but I did not think to take notice of the Child. Call'd her Mistress. I told her, being encourag'd by David Jeffries loving eyes, and sweet Words, I was come to enquire whether she could find in her heart to leave that House and Neighbourhood, and go and dwell with me at the South-end; I think she said softly, Not yet. I told her It did not ly in my Lands to keep a Coach. If I should, I should be in danger to be brought to keep company with her Neighbour Brooker, (he was a little before sent to prison for Debt). Told her I had an Antipathy against those who would pretend to give themselves; but nothing of their Estate. I would a proportion of my Estate with my self And I suppos'd she would do so. As to a Perriwig, My best and greatest Friend, I could not possibly have a greater, began to find me with Hair before I was born, and had continued to do so ever since; and I could not find in my heart to go to another. She commended the book I gave her, Dr. Preston, the Church Marriage, quoting him saying 'twas inconvenient keeping out of a Fashion commonly used. I said the Time and Tide did circumscribe my Visit. She gave me a Dram of Black-Cherry Brandy, and gave me a lump of the Sugar that was in it. She wish'd me a good Journy. I pray'd God to keep her, and came away. Had a very pleasant Journy to Salem.

Nov^r. 2. Midweek, went again, and found Mrs. Alden there, who quickly went out. Gave her about ½ pound of Sugar Almonds, cost 3^s per £. Carried them on Monday. She seem'd pleas'd with them, ask'd what they cost. Spake of giving her a Hundred pounds per annum if I dy'd before her. Ask'd her what sum she would give me, if she should dy first? Said I would give her time to Consider of it. She said she heard as if I had given all to my Children by Deeds of Gift. I told her 'twas a mistake. Point-Judith was mine &c. That in England, I own'd, my Father's desire was that it should go to my eldest Son; 'twas 20£ per annum; she thought 'twas forty. I think when I seem'd to excuse pressing this, she seem'd to

think twas best to speak of it; a long winter was coming on. Gave me a Glass or two of Canary.

Nov^r 4th. Friday, Went again about 7. a-clock; found there Mr. John Walley and his wife; sat discoursing pleasantly - - - About 9. they went away. I ask'd Madam what fashioned Neck-lace I should present her with, She said, None at all. I ask'd her Whereabout we left off last time; mention'd what I had offer'd to give her; Ask'd her what she would give me; She said she could not Change her Condition. She had said so from the beginning, could not be so far from her Children, the Lecture. Quoted the Apostle Paul affirming that a single Life was better than a Married. I answer'd That for the present Distress. Said she had not pleasure in things of that nature as formerly. I said, you are the fitter to make me a Wife. If she held in that mind, I must go home and bewail my Rashness in making more haste than good Speed. - - - She charg'd me with saying, that she must put away Juno, if she came to me: I utterly deny'd it, it never came in my heart; yet she insisted upon it; - - -

Monday, Nov^r. 7th. My Son pray'd in the Old Chamber. Our time had been taken up by Son and Daughter Cooper's Visit; so that I only read the 130th. and 143. Psalm. Twas on the Account of my Courtship. I went to Mad. Winthrop; found her rocking her little Katee in the Cradle. I excus'd my Coming so late (near Eight). She set me an arm'd Chair and Cusheon; and so

the Cradle was between her arm'd Chair and mine. Gave her the remnant of my Almonds; She did not eat of them as before; but laid them away; I said I came to enquire whether she had alter'd her mind since Friday, or remained of the same mind still. She said, Thereabouts. I told her I loved her, and was so fond⁴ as to think that she loved me: She said she had a great respect for me. I told her, I had made her an offer, without asking any advice; she had so many to advise with, that twas a hindrance. The Fire was come to one short Brand besides the Block, which Brand was set up in end; at last it fell to pieces, and no Recruit was made: She gave me a Glass of Wine. I think I repeated again that I would go home and bewail my Rashness in making more haste than good Speed. I would endeavour to contain myself, and not go on to solicit her to do that which she could not Consent to. Took leave of her. As came down the steps she bid me have a Care. Treated me Courtcously. Told her she had enter'd the 4th year of her Widowhood. I had given her the News-Letter before: I did not bid her draw off her Glove as sometime I had done. Her Dress was not so clean as sometime it had been. Jehovah jireh!

March, 29th [1722]. Samuel Sewall, and Mrs. Mary Gibbs were joined together in Marriage by the Rev^d. Mr. William Cooper, - - -

⁴ Foolish.

SARAH KEMBLE KNIGHT

1666 - 1727

Madam Knight, as she was called, "out of respect of her character," was the daughter of Captain Thomas Kemble, a Boston merchant. Some time after the death of her husband, Richard Knight, she opened (in 1706) a school in Boston in which Benjamin Franklin is said to have studied. In 1704 she went to New York on business. Her route was that now followed by "Shore Line" trains. The diary which she kept gives a lively picture of semi-frontier life which seemed almost as foreign to her as it seems to us.

"Madam Knight's Journal [says George Parker Winship] is the truest picture left to us of provincial New England. Ever since it was first printed in 1825 it has been the delight of those whose reading takes them below the surface of current writings about colonial times, but it has nevertheless remained one of the least familiar of contemporary sources. The reason for this may have something to do with the fact that the people described by her are not like those portrayed in most of the books about ancestral New Englanders."

In 1825 an edition was brought out by Theodore Dwight, whose introduction is reprinted in the 1920 edition by George Parker Winship.

[Travel in Western New England]
from THE JOURNAL OF MADAM
KNIGHT (1704; 1825)

Monday, Octob'r. y^e second, 1704.

About three o'clock afternoon, I begun my Journey from Boston to New-Haven; being about two Hundred Mile. My Kinsman, Capt. Robert Luist, waited on me as farr as Dedham, where I was to meet y^e Western post.

I vissitted the Reverd. Mr. Belcher, y^e Minister of y^e town, and tarried there till evening, in hopes y^e post would come along. But he not coming, I resolved to go to Billingses where he used to lodg, being 12 miles further. But being ignorant of the way, Mad^m Billings [Belcher?], seing no persuasions of her good spouses or hers could prevail with me to Lodg there that night, Very kindly went wyth me to y^e Tavern, where I hoped to get my guide, And desired the Hostess to inquire of her guests whether any of them would go with mee. But they, being tyed by the Lipps to a pewter engine, scarcely allowed themselves time to say what clownish [Here half a page of the MS. is gone.] Peices of eight, I told her no, I would not be accessary to such extortion.

Then John shan't go, sais shee. No, indeed, shan't hee; And held forth at that rate a long time, that I began to fear I was got among the Quaking tribe, beleeving not a Limbertong'd sister among them could out do Madm. Hostes.

Upon this, to my no small surprise, son John arose, and gravely demanded what I would give him to go with me? Give you, sais I, are you

John? Yes, says he, for want of a Better; And behold! this John look't as old as my Host, and perhaps had bin a man in the last Century. Well, Mr. John, sais I, make your demands. Why, half a pss [piece]. of eight and a dram, sais John. I agreed, and gave him a Dram (now) in hand to bind the bargain.

My hostess catechis'd John for going so cheap, saying his poor wife would break her heart [Here another half-page of the MS. is gone.] His shade on his Hors resembled a Globe on a Gate post. His habitt, Hors and furniture, its looks and goings Incomparably answered the rest.

Thus Jogging on with an easy pace, my Guide telling mee it was dangero's to Ride hard in the Night, (wh^{ch} his hors had the sence to avoid,) Hee entertained me with the Adventurs he had passed by late Rideing, and eminent Dangers he had escaped, so that, Remembring the Hero's in Parismus and the Knight of the Oracle, I didn't know but I had mett wth a Prince disguis'd.

When we had Ridd about an how'r, wee come into a thick swamp, wch. by Reason of a great fogg, very much startled mee, it being now very Dark. But nothing dismay'd John: Hee had encountered a thousand and a thousand such Swamps, having a Universall Knowledge in the woods; and readily Answered all my inquiries wch. were not a few.

In about an how'r, or something more, after we left the Swamp, we come to Billingses, where I was to Lodg. My Guide dismounted and very Complasantly help't me down and shewd the door, signing to me wth his hand to Go in;

w^{ch} I Gladly did—But had not gone many steps into the Room, ere I was Interogated by a young Lady I understood afterwards was the Eldest daughter of the family, with these, or words to this purpose, (*viz.*) Law for mee—what in the world brings You here at this time a night?—I never see a woman on the Rode so Dreadfull late, in all the days of my versall life. Who are You? Where are You going? I'm scar'd out of my witts—with much now [more?] of the same Kind I stood aghast, Prepareing to reply, when in comes my Guide—to him Madam turn'd, Roreing out: Lawfull heart, John, is it You?—how de dol Where in the world are you going with this woman? Who is she? John made no Ansr. but sat down in the corner, fumbled out his black Junk, and saluted that instead of Debb, she then turned agen to mee and fell anew into her silly questions, without asking mee to sitt down.

I told her shee treated me very Rudely, and I did not think it my duty to answer her unmanly Questions. But to get ridd of them, I told her I come there to have the post's company with me to-morrow on my Journey, &c. Miss star'd awhile, drew a chair, bid me sitt, And then run upstairs and putts on two or three Rings, (or else I had not seen them before,) and returning, sett herself just before me, showing the way to Reding, that I might see her Ornaments, perhaps to gain the more respect. But her Granam's new Rung sow, had it appeared, would [have] affected me as much. I paid honest John wth money and dram according to contract, and Dismist him, and pray'd Miss to shew me where I must Lodg. Shee conducted me to a parlour in a little back Lento [lean-to], w^{ch} was almost fill'd wth the bedsted, w^{ch} was so high that I was forced to climb on a chair to gitt up to y^e wretched bed that lay on it; on w^{ch} having Stretcht my tired Limbs, and lay'd my head on a Sad-colour'd pillow, I began to think on the transactions of y^e past day.

Tuesday, October y^e third.

about 8 in the morning, I with the Post proceeded forward without observing any thing remarkable; And about two, afternoon, Arrived at the Post's second stage, where the western Post mett him and exchanged Letters. Here, having called for something to eat, y^e woman bro't in a Twisted thing like a cable, but something whiter; and laying it on the bord, tugg'd for life to bring it into a capacity to spread; w^{ch} having wth great

pains accomplished, she serv'd in a dish of Pork and Cabage, I suppose the remains of Dinner. The sause was of a deep Purple, w^{ch} I tho't was boil'd in her dye Kettle; the bread was Indian, and every thing on the Table service Agreeable to these. I, being hungry, gott a little down; but my stomach was soon cloy'd, and what cabbage I swallowed serv'd me for a Cudd the whole day after.

Having here discharged the Ordinary for self and Guide, (as I understood was the custom,) About Three, alternoon, went on with my Third Guide, who Rode very hard; and having crossed Providence Ferry, we come to a River w^{ch} they Generally Ride thro'. But I dare not venture, so the Post got a Ladd and Cannoo to carry me to tother side, and hee rid thro' and Led my hors. The Canoo was very small and shallow, so that when we were in she seem'd redy to take in water, which greatly terrified mee, and caused me to be very circumspect, sitting with my hands fast on each side, my eyes stedy, not daring so much as to lodg my tongue a hair's breadth more on one side of my mouth than tother, nor so much as think on Lott's wife, for a wry thought would have oversett our wherey: But was soon put out of this pain, by feeling the Cannoo on shore, w^{ch} I as soon almost saluted with my feet; and Rewarding my sculler, again mounted and made the best of our way forwards. The Rode here was very even and y^e day pleasant, it being now near Sunsett. But the Post told mee we had neer 14 miles to Ride to the next Stage, (where we were to Lodg.) I askt him of the rest of the Rode, foreseeing we must travail in the night. Hee told mee there was a bad River we were to Ride thro', w^{ch} was so very firce a hors could sometimes hardly stem it: But it was but narrow, and wee should soon be over. I cannot express the concern of mind this relation sett me in: no thoughts but those of the dang'ros River could entertain my Imagination, and they were as formidable as varios, still Tormenting me with blackest Ideas of my Approaching fate—Sometimes seeing my self drowning, otherwhiles drowned, and at the best like a holy Sister just come out of a Spiritual Bath in dripping Garments.

Now was the Glorious Luminary, wth his swift Coursers arrived at his Stage, leaving poor me wth the rest of this part of the lower world in darkness, with which wee were soon Surrounded.

The only Glimering we now had was from the spangled Skies, Whose Imperfect Reflections rendered every Object formidable Each lifeless Trunk, with its shatter'd Limbs, appear'd an Armed Enymie; and every little stump like a Ravenous devourer. Nor could I so much as discern my Guide, when at any distance, which added to the terror.

Thus, absolutely lost in Thought, and dying with the very thoughts of drowning, I come up with the Post, who I did not see till even with his Hors: he told mee he stopt for mee; and wee Rode on Very deliberately a few paces, when we entred a Thickett of Trees and Shrubbs, and I perceived by the Hors's going, we were on the descent of a Hill, w^{ch}, as wee come neerer the bottom, 'twas totally dark, wth the Trees that surrounded it. But I knew by the Going of the Hors wee had entred the water, w^{ch} my Guide told mee was the hazzardos River he had told me off; and hee, Riding up close to my Side, Bid me not fear—we should be over Imediately. I now ralyed all the Courage I was mistrss of, Knowing that I must either Venture my fate of drowning, or be left like y^e Children in the wood. So, as the Post bid me, I gave Reins to my Nagg; and sitting as Steady as Just before in the Cannoo, in a few minutes got safe to the other side, which hee told mee was the Narragansett country. - - -

Being come to mr. Havens', I was very civilly Received, and courteously entertained, in a clean comfortable House; and the Good woman was very active in helping off my Riding clothes, and then ask't what I would eat. I told her I had some Chocolett, if shee would prepare it; which with the help of some Milk, and a little clean brass Kettle, she soon effected to my satisfaction. I then betook me to my Apartment, w^{ch} was a little Room parted from the Kitchen by a single bord partition; where, after I had noted the Occurrances of the past day, I went to bed, which, tho' pretty hard, Yet neet and handsome. But I could get no sleep, because of the Clamor of some of the Town tope-ers in next Room, Who were entred into a strong debate concerning y^e Signification of the name of their Country, (*viz.*) *Narraganset*. One said it was named so by y^e Indians, because there grew a Brier there, of a Prodigious Highth and bigness, the like hardly ever known, called by the Indians *Narragansett*;

And quotes an Indian of so Barberous a name for his Author, that I could not write it. His Antagonist Replied no— It was from a Spring it had its name, w^{ch} hee well knew where it was, which was extreem cold in summer, and as Hott as could be imagined in the winter, which was much resorted too by the natives, and by them called *Narragansett*, (*Hott and Cold*) and that was the originall of their places name—with a thousand Impertinances not worth notice, w^{ch} He utter'd with such a Roreing voice and Thundering blows with the fist of wickedness on the Table, that it peirced my very head. I heartily fretted, and wish't 'um tongue tyed; but wth as little succes as a freind of mine once, who was (as shee said) kept a whole night awake, on a Jorney, by a country Left.¹ and a Sergeant, Insigne and a Deacon, contriving how to bring a triangle into a Square. They kept calling for tother Gill, w^{ch} while they were swallowing, was some Intermission; But presently, like Oyle to fire, encreased the flame. I set my Candle on a Chest by the bed side, and setting up, fell to my old way of composing my Resentments, in the following manner:

*I ask thy Aid, O Potent Rum!
To Charm these wrangling Topers Dum.
Thou hast their Giddy Brains possest—
The man confounded wth the Beast—
And I, poor I, can get no rest.
Intoxicate them with thy fumes
O still their Tongues till morning comes!*

And I know not but my wishes took effect; for the dispute soon ended wth 'tother Dram; and so Good night!

Wedensday, Octobr 4th.

About four in the morning, we set out for Kingston (for so was the Town called) with a french Docter in our company. Hee and y^e Post put on very furiously, so that I could not keep up with them, only as now and then they'd stop till they see mee. This Rode was poorly furnished wth accommodations for Travellers, so that we were forced to ride 22 miles by the post's account, but neerer thirty by mine, before wee could bait so much as our Horses, w^{ch} I exceedingly complained of. But the post encourag'd mee, by saying wee should be well accommodated anon at

¹ Lieutenant. Compare the British pronunciation of this word.

mr. Devils, a few miles further. But I questioned whether we ought to go to the Devil to be helpt out of affliction. However, like the rest of De-luded souls that post to y^e Infernal denn, Wee made all posible speed to this Devil's Habitation; where alliting, in full assurance of good accommodation, wee were going in. But meeting his two daughters, as I suposed twins, they so neerly resembled each other, both in features and habit, and look't as old as the Divil himselfe, and quite as Ugly, We desired entertainm't, but could hardly get a word out of 'um, till with our Importunity, telling them our necessity, &c. they call'd the old Sophister, who was as sparing of his words as his daughters had bin, and no, or none, was the reply's hee made us to our demands. Hee differed only in this from the old fellow in to'ther Country. hee let us depart. However, I thought it proper to warn poor Travailers to endeavor to Avoid falling into circumstances like ours, w^{ch} at our next Stage I sat down and did as followeth:

5 *May all that dread the cruel feind of night
Keep on, and not at this curs't Mansion light.
'Tis Hell, 'tis Hell' and Devils here do dwell.
Here dwells the Devill—surely this's Hell
Nothing but Wants. a drop to cool yo'r Tongue
Cant be procur'd these cruel Feinds among
Plenty of horrid Grims and looks seveal,
Hunger and thirst, But pitty's bannish'd here—
The Right hand keep, if Hell on Earth you fear!*

10 Thus leaving this habitation of cruelty, we went forward; and arriving at an Ordinary about two mile further, found tollerable accomodation. But our Hostes, being a pretty full mouth'd old creature, entertain'd our fellow travailer, y^e french
15 Doctor, wth Innumirable complaints of her bodily infirmities; and whispered to him so lou'd, that all y^e House had as full a hearing as hee; which was very divirting to y^e company, (of which there was a great many,) as one might see by their
20 sneering. But poor weary I slipt out to enter my mind in my Jornal, and left my Great Landly with her Talkative Guests to themselves. - - -

WILLIAM BYRD

1674 - 1744

If New England be called a receptacle of Dissenters, and an Amsterdam of religion, Pennsylvania the nursery of Quakers, Maryland the retirement of Roman Catholics, North Carolina the refuge of runaways, and South Carolina the delight of buccaneers and pirates, Virginia may be justly esteemed the happy retreat of true Britons and true Churchmen. . . .

—HUGH JONES, *The Present State of Virginia* (1724).

The Virginia aristocracy, of which William Byrd II was a distinguished representative, was largely of native growth. Says John Spencer Bassett, Byrd's editor and biographer:

"The aristocratic form of Virginia society . . . proceeded from economic, social, and political causes. On its economic side it was supported by land and servitude; on its social side it was sustained by the ideals, and somewhat by the blood, of the English

country gentlemen; on its political side it was fostered by a system of appointments to office which left the least room for a democracy. In the century which preceded the Revolution it was in its greatest vigor. Like all aristocracies which are not frequently renewed from outside sources, it at length went into decay; but in the century of its vigor it produced a type of leadership which few other communities have equaled."

Byrd's father, William Byrd I, was a Virginia official, trader, and landed proprietor. The son was educated in Europe. He was in England by 1681. In 1689-1690 he was in Holland, which he did not like. Returning to England, he studied law at the Middle Temple in London. In 1696 he returned to Virginia and was elected to the General Assembly. He was in England as a colonial agent from 1697 to 1705. His father's death, on December 4, 1704, brought him back to Virginia, where he succeeded his father as receiver-general and in 1709 became a member of the Council, which then practically governed the colony. In 1706 he married Lucy Parke, daughter of General Daniel Parke. Somewhat later he assumed her father's debts, which troubled him thereafter for many years. In 1710 arrived the new Governor, Alexander Spotswood, who in trying to curb the power of the Council stirred Byrd and others to opposition. Byrd spent the years 1715-1726 in England, partly at least in combating Spotswood. In 1724 he married Maria Taylor—his first wife had died in 1716. After his return to Virginia in 1726, Byrd visited England no more. He lived the life of a country gentleman at his beautiful estate of Westover on the banks of the James. He built up one of the largest libraries in the colonies, some 3500 volumes. He wrote to a London friend: "A Library, a Garden, a Grove, and a Purling Stream are the Innocent Scenes that divert our Leisure." His life, however, was not altogether the peaceful life he implies. He helped to survey the boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina in 1728, and the "Northern Neck" in Virginia in 1736. He owned at the time of his death in 1744 (also the year of Alexander Pope's death) not less than 179,440 acres of land. At the time of his death he was president of the Virginia Council of State.

Byrd is one of the major figures in our Colonial literature, but until recent years literary historians were slow to recognize this fact. *A History of the Dividing Line* was not published until 1841, almost a century after his death, when Edmund Ruffin brought out *The Westover Manuscripts* in Petersburg, Virginia. Books printed in the South in those days of controversy over slavery were little read outside the state in which they were printed. It was twelve years before Washington Irving heard of the book. The first scholarly treatment of Byrd appeared in 1901 when John Spencer Bassett published *The Writings of "Colonel William Byrd of Westover in Virginia Esqr."* This edition, however, does not contain *A Secret History of the Line*, which Professor William Kenneth Boyd brought out in 1929. In 1940 Professors R. C. Beatty and W. J. Mulloy published *William Byrd's Natural History of Virginia*, retranslated into English from a Swiss colonization pamphlet to which Byrd had contributed. In the same year Louis B. Wright and Marion Tinling published *The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1709-1712*, and in 1942 Maude H. Woodfin and Mrs. Tinling published *Another Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1739-1741: With Letters & Literary Exercises*. The letters and "characters" in *Another Secret Diary* are an important addition to the Byrd canon. They include an interesting self-portrait, "Inamorato [.] L'Oiseaux," reprinted below. Byrd's diary lacks the literary qualities

THE COLONIAL PERIOD -----1607-1765

of Samuel Pepys's famous work, but it has considerable importance for the Virginia historian and it throws new light upon the character of its author.

Unlike most Americans of his time, Byrd was educated in England and lived there many years. He was a contemporary of Addison, Steele, Swift, and Pope; and his best writing has the fine qualities of eighteenth-century English prose. It was an age in which letter writing was considered an art, and Byrd's letters are excellent. His best work, however, is found in *A History of the Dividing Line* and the two shorter pieces *Journey to the Land of Eden* and *Progress to the Mines*. *A Secret History of the Line* (1929) is considerably shorter than the older version. In it Byrd employs fictitious names and omits the well-known satiric descriptions of North Carolinians. The shorter version, in fact, reveals scandalous conduct by certain Virginia members of the party toward women along the border. Byrd's best claim to fame is found in *A History of the Dividing Line*, which is at once a diary, a travel book, a history, an account of American flora and fauna, and a collection of character portraits. No other American writer before Benjamin Franklin has a literary style comparable to Byrd's.

The best recent account of Byrd's life is found in Louis B. Wright's *The First Gentlemen of Virginia* (1940). Further references are given in Lewis Leary (ed.), *Articles on American Literature . . .* (1947).

LETTERS

TO SIR HANS SLOANE*

Sir Hans Sloane (1660-1753) was secretary to the Royal Society (1693-1712) and president of the Royal College of Physicians (1719-1735). He founded a botanic garden in Chelsea. His collections were bought by the nation and placed in the British Museum.

VIRGINIA the 20th of April 1706.

SIR

The news of my Fathers Death hurry'd me so suddenly from England, that I had not time to receive the commands of the Society, or of your Self, so Laborious a member of it. However I think my Self oblig'd to offer my Service by this first opportunity, and should be very ambitious to do any thing for you, that might make me worthy of the honour I have of being of that

illustrious Body, that are ever at work for the good of ungrateful mankind.

The country where fortune hast [*sic*] cast my Lot, is a large feild for natural inquirys, and tis much to be lamented, that we have not some people of skil and curiosity amongst us. I know no body here capable of makeing very great discoveries, So that Nature has thrown away a vast deal of her bounty upon Us to no purpose. Here be some men indeed that are call'd Doctors: but they are generally discarded Surgeons of Ships, that know nothing above very common Remedys. They are not acquainted enough with Plants or the other parts of Natural History, to do any Service to the World, which makes me wish that we had some missionary Philosopher, that might instruct us in the many usefull things which we now possess to no purpose.

The infinite deal of business I had since my arrival has not permitted me to furnish my self with many observations upon the country. This may be allowed to be a very reasonable excuse for me, who found all my private affairs in great disorder after haveing been 8 months without an

* The letter to Sir Hans Sloane is reprinted, by permission of the editor, from Vol. I, Second Series, of the *William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine*.

owner And besides that, My Lord Treasurer has laid his commands upon me, to pass all my Fathers public accompts over again, which are of seaventeen years Standing. And I have been wholly employ'd upon that, to the neglect of my own necessary business, that I might be in con-
 5 dition to obey His Lordps commands before the sailing of this Fleet. This certainly will excuse me to the Society for this year, especially when I promise to be as Serviceable as I am able to it
 10 the next.

There's nothing Vexes me so much as to find in some of your ignorant newspapers, (God forbid I should call the Gazet one of these) that such a ship arriv'd in so many weeks from Virginia, & left the country very healthy. Which last re-
 15 marque makes the world believe, that the Country is at other times generally very Sickly. But I can assure you, they do it abundance of wrong, that believe it to be so; for I fancy here be as few diseases as any w[h]ere, and those that we have are justly to be chargd upon intemper-
 20 ance, or excessive ill management. Indeed the many Rivers, and the vast quantity of water all over the country incline people now & then to agues, especially at the time of year, when people eat fruit without any other measure than the big-
 25 ness of their bellys. But as Agues come by taking cold, I set my Country men an example, that will guard 'em from that inconvenience, if they'll have the grace to follow it. I have all the last winter gone once or twice a week into the river, without being discourag'd by frost or Snow, and find so much benefit by that management, that I design always to continue it throughout the
 30 year. This hardens me and makes me prooffe against all the sudden turns of weather, that give colds to other people. At first I passt for a madman for this unusual proceeding: but several do now begin in their opinions to be reconcil'd to my method, tho not in their practice. If People would be perswaded to this, twoud Save a world of Jesuits bark,¹ and Starve all our Doctors.

I have herewith sent a small box of the Root, with which the Indians us'd to cure the bite of a Rattle-Snake. And all the Traders which we send
 45 several hundreds of miles to traffick with the Indians, find it constantly to cure their horses, when they happen to be bit. I my Self have Servants that have try'd it often, and never knew it miss.

¹ Quinine.

The method is, as soon as ever they perceive either man or horse to be bit, they pound about the quantity 2 roots at most, and give it in water. It soon begins to operate violently by sweat, while the patient lys panting with the tongue out for 2 or 3 hours together, & then is perfectly well. What is wonderfull in this medicine is, that it has no sensible operation upon any creature that has not been poisoned. Certainly a Plant that has virtue enough to cure so venomous a bite, as that of the Rattle-snake, must be of infinite use in other disasters. I beg the Society woud please to make some experimts with it, because I'm confident it will do great Service in many cases.

Pray do me the favour to let me hear from you, and let me know how the Society flourishes, with a full assurance of the utmost endeavours to promote its advantage by

Sir

Your most faithfull Servt

WILLIAM BYRD

P/S

Since I writ the other side I have discover'd the true Hypoquecuana, of which I send you a Sample. Both the fashion of the Root and the similitude of the operation leave me no doubt that tis the same with that sent from the Spanish West Indies. However pray try it, and give me yours and the Societys opinion of it. I have also sent you the Root which we find a kind of Specifique both for the dry gripes, and the wind-Cholique. In those distempers it never fails to go thro the body, when nothing else will, if taken in a large quantity. I have put up also Some of our assarabbacca which we have of 2 sorts, but this is the best. Be pleas'd to let me know what uses may be made of all these things, that so I may be able to do good with them here, as I hope you will there. When I have more time, I hope I shall be able to do more Service, in the mean while do me the justice to believe, that nobody has better inclinations to promote natural knowledge than my Self, and if you will direct me after what manner I may be most serviceable to the Society & to the common wealth of learning, I will readily obey you. If you have any thing curious there, I should be obliged to you, if you'll please to favour me with the knowledge of it. Be so kind as to send your letters to Mr. Micajah Perry in Leaden-
 50 hall Street, and he will carefully convey them to me by the first opportunity. Adieu. Pray send me some Seed of lemmon-thime.

TO JOHN FOX*

John Fox (1686?-1741?), a Virginian, conducted an ephemeral English literary weekly called the *Wanderer* in 1717. From his files he compiled a book entitled *Motto's of the Wanderers* (1718), which he dedicated in fulsome fashion to Byrd, who was in London from 1715 to 1720. Byrd's letter to Fox appears in his handwriting in a copy of the book now in the Harvard Library. See Kenneth Ballard Murdock, "William Byrd and the Virginian Author of *The Wanderer*," *Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature*, XVII (1935), 129-136. "It would be interesting," says Professor Murdock, "to know whether his letter ever reached Fox. It is possible that the note was only a first draft, later copied and sent, or that he relented and despatched a somewhat less discouraging reply, along with the guinea as a 'bribe.' Probably, however, he sent the book back to the author, with the note on the fly-leaf. In any case, the letter does credit to Byrd's good sense and modesty, and testifies to his literary taste—for the *Motto's* is indeed 'no extraordinary Performance.'"

TO THE AUTHOR

[1718?]

I must confess my self offended at the liberty you have taken of prefixing my name to your Works, without the ceremony of inquiring whether it would be agreeable. Had you given your self the trouble of asking that civil question, I should have told you with great freedom, that next to appearing on the Title-page of no extraordinary Performance, a man makes the unhappiest figure in the Dedication. But what I have most Reason to complain of on this occasion is that you craftily abuse me by too great a prodigality of commendation. In revenge of this oblique way of reproach the very least I can do is to wish that your Book may have few courteous Readers and those such only as cant discern the wide [di]fference betwixt the glowing Picture and the Original. My servant will bring you a Guinea, which I would intreat you by no means to look upon as an acknowledgment for the favour you have done me, but as a bribe to do it no more. I am

Your humble Servant

W BYRD.

* Reprinted from *Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature*, Vol. XVII, by permission of the editor, Professor Murdock, and the Harvard College Library.

TO CHARMANTE*

The following letter is the last of a series found in Byrd's letter-book. At the time it was written he was in London. His first wife was dead and he had not yet remarried. The closing paragraph was probably added some years later. Charmante has been identified as Lady Elizabeth Lee, a granddaughter of Charles II. In 1731 she married the poet Edward Young, author of *Night Thoughts*.

November 7th, 1722.

I beg the generous Charmante will please to forgive me if I presume to write once more, & that she wont look upon that to be a transgression of her orders, which is only a promise of obedience. Tho I must confess her last orders were very short & Sudden, yet I will prove the intire Regard I have for her by exactly observing them. I will not endeavor to convince her, that the slightest Hint of her Pleasure shall be a Law to me, tho never so disagreeable to myself. But Dear Madame what cou'd provoke you to deliver your commands last night in that odd place? I don't remember I was asking an Alms of you, that you shou'd deny me, like a common Begger, in the street—you know very well you have lately had more opportunity than one of Signifying your Mind to me at your own House. That certainly had been a more proper Place, unless you intended by the Surprize of the onset, to cut off all possibility of Reply. Surely you cou'd not apprehend, I shou'd in the bitterness of my Soul have reproacht you with any Instances of your former Conduct, in case you had attackt me in a Fair Field of Battle. You have been safe from such ungenerous treatment from me, Madam, because I think it very absurd to upbraid a Lady with lesser Favours when I am deserving the greatest. God knows were I capable of finding any fault with you, it shou'd be that your behaviour, instead of being too kind has not been kind enough. But Madam you are safer from any Reproaches from me, than from yourself, & let your treatment of me be never so evil & ungenerous, still my carriage to you shall be unblamable. During my whole address to you, I have behaved with truth & honour & shall always love you too well to do or say anything to your dis-

* The letters to Charmante, Benjamin Lynde, and Franky Otway are reprinted, by permission of the editor, from the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*.

advantage. I cou'd not injure you Madame for the whole world, nor for what is more valuable than 20 worlds, your dear self, & thats high as honour can go. However if after all you shou'd determine to make me unhappy I will submit to my Hard Fate, without reproaching any thing but my Stars, & in return of your unkind usage shall earnestly pray that everything that is good everything that is prosperous may befall you. And if ever you marry any other man (Oh dreadful the thought) may he set as just a value upon your fine qualits & charming Person & take as much pleasure in making you happy as I shou'd do: more I'm sure will be impossible. May Sprightly Health and gaiety of Mind, may full content and all the joys resulting from Virtue & honour attend you to the end of your days. Provided my dearest Charmante is thus completely blest it matters not what becomes of her unfortunate Humble Servant.

These Passionate Billets were writ to a Lady who had more charms than Honour more wit than discretion. In the beginning she gave the writer of them the plainest marks of her Favour. He did not hint his passion to her but spoke it openly and confirmed it with many a tender squeeze of the hand, which she suffered with the Patience of a Martyr. Nay that she might have no doubt of his Intentions He put the question to her in the plainest terms, which she seem'd to agree to by a Modest Silence & by great encouragements for more than a month afterwards. She saw him every day, received his Letters, & fed his Flame by the gentlest behaviour in the world 'til at last of a sudden, with-out any Provocation on his part, she grew *Resty* & in a moment she turn'd all her Smiles into Frowns, & all his Hopes into Despair. Whether this sudden change was caused by private scandal she had received about Him, or from pure Inconstancy of temper, He cant be sure. The first is not unlikely because he had a rival, that had no hopes of success openly, & therefore it might be necessary to work underground and blow him by a Mine. This suspicion is confirmed a little by the Rivals marrying her afterwards, who was then poor, that tis likely the good natured woman might wed him out of charity—especially as at that time he was so unhealthy that he stood more in need of a nurse than a Wife. She did not choose him for his beauty & length of chin 'tho possibly she might for those

pure morals which recommended him to his grace of W—² for a companion. But if after all she did not marry him for his virtue neither, then it must have been for the worst quality any husband can have—for his wit That, I own he has his share of, yet so overcharged and encumbered with words that he does more violence to the ear than a ring of bells; for, if he had never so sharp a wit, a wife may be sure the edge of it will be turned against herself mostly. - - -

TO BENJAMIN LYNDE

Lynde, whom Byrd had known in London, was Chief Justice of Massachusetts from 1728 until his death in 1715. His home was in Salem, Mass.

VIRGINIA, *the 20th of February, 1735* [6].

20 S'r:

Considering the frequent opportunities you have of sending your commands to your Friends here I wonder by what misbehaviour on my part you have not honour'd me with a syllable since the return of Mr. Eppes.³ I troubled you with a long Epistle by that Gentleman, tho' your silence almost tempts me to suppose he never delivered it. Yet this baulk don't discourage me from making a second attack upon your meditations. I can depend upon this Young Gentleman's waiting upon you with my respects. He is son of one of your own Countrymen, Mr. Ravenscroft, who haveing some Relatives there, has sent his son to make them a visit. Besides he hopes to learn many usefull things in that industrious part of the world, and, contrary to the custom of many Travellers, return both wiser & better, both which he will have a fair chance to do if you will please to shew his Modesty some countenance. You and I both remember what an advantage it was to two bashfull people to be taken notice of by the worthys of a strange country.

Whenever I meet with any of your saints from New England I fail not to ask kindly after my Lord Chief Justice, & have that Joy, which he denys me, of understanding he is still a healthy, vigorous old fellow. They tell me like Moses & Caleb he grows ancient without decay & promises as long a life. I wish you would live long enough

² Probably Philip, Duke of Wharton.

³ Daniel Epes, Jr., had visited Byrd at Westover in 1732.

to make all your countrymen honest by your righteous Judgments and good Example, & then Methusalem & you will be the oldest men in story. I fancy your laws there are so tender that they put no knaves to death, but by a peculiar sort of Banishment condemn them to sail about the world in Sloops, & so expose them to the fury of the Ocean. Some of these Banditti anchor near my estate, for the advantage of traffiquing with my Slaves, from whom they are sure to have good Penny worths. I am now prosecuting one of them whose name is Grant, for this crime, and have evidence sufficient to convict Him. I wish you would be so kind as to hang up all your Felons at home, and not send them abroad to discredit their country in this manner.

If I could persuade our Captain of the Guard Ship to take a cruise to Boston at a proper Season, I would come and beat up your Quarters at Salem. I want to see what alteration forty years have wrought in you since we used to intrigue together in The Temple. But Matrimony has attoned sufficiently for such Backslidings, & now I suppose you have so little fellow feeling left for the naughty Jades, that you can order them a good whipping without any relenting. But though I should be mistaken, I hope your conscience, with the aid of three score and ten, has gained a compleat victory over your constitution, which is almost the case of S'r, your, etc.

For Mr. Lynde.

TO LORD EGMONT*

This letter is addressed to the first president of the trustees of the new colony of Georgia.

[VIRGINIA, July 12, 1736.]

... Your Lord^{sh} opinion concerning Rum and Negros is certainly very just, and your excluding both of them from your Colony of Georgia will be very happy; tho' with Respect to Rum, the Saints of New England I fear will find out some trick to evade your Act of Parliament. They have a great dexterity at palliating a perjury so well as to leave no taste of it in the mouth, nor can any people like them slip through a penal statute. They will give some other Name to their Rum, which they may safely do, because it gos by that of Kill-Devil in this country from its bane-

full qualitys. A watchfull Eye must be kept on these foul Traders or all the precautions of the Trustees will be in vain.

I wish my Lord we could be blesst with the same Prohibition. They import so many Negros hither, that I fear this Colony will some time or other be confirmd by the Name of New Guinea. I am sensible of many bad consequences of multiplying these Ethiopians amongst us. They blow up the pride, and ruin the Industry of our White People, who seeing a Rank of poor Creatures below them, detest work for fear it should make them look like Slaves. Then that poverty which will ever attend upon Idleness, disposes them as much to pilfer as it dos the Portuguese, who account it much more like a Gentleman to steal, than to dirty their hands with Labour of any kind.

Another unhappy Effect of Many Negros is the necessity of being severe. Numbers make them insolent, and then foul Means must do what fair will not. We have however nothing like the Inhumanity here that is practiced in the Islands, and God forbid we ever should. But these base Tempters require to be rid with a tort [taut] Rein, or they will be apt to throw their Rider. Yet even this is terrible to a good naturd Man, who must submit to be either a Fool or a Fury. And this will be more our unhappy case, the more Negros are increast amongst us.

But these private mischeifs are nothing if compar'd to the publick danger. We have already at least 10,000 Men of these descendants of Ham fit to bear Arms, and their Numbers increase every day as well by birth as Importation. And in case there should arise a Man of desperate courage amongst us, exasperated by a desperate fortune, he might with more advantage than Catiline kindle a Servile War. Such a man might be dreadfully mischeivous before any opposition could be formed against him, and tinge our Rivers as wide as they are with blood. besides the Calamitys which woud be brought upon us by such an Attempt, it woud cost our Mother Country many a fair Million to make us as profitable as we are at present.

It were therefore worth the consideration of a British Parliament, My Lord, to put an end to this unchristian Traffick of makeing Merchandize of Our Fellow Creatures. At least the farther Importation of them into our Our [sic] Colonys should be prohibited lest they prove as trouble-

* Reprinted from the *American Historical Review*, Vol. I, by permission of the editor.

some and dangerous everywhere, as they have been lately in Jamaica, where besides a vast expence of Mony, they have cost the lives of many of his Majesty's Subjects. We have mountains in Virginia too, to which they may retire as safely, and do as much mischeif as they do in Jamaica. All these matters duly considerd, I wonder the Legislature will Indulge a few ravenous Traders to the danger of the Publick safety, and such Traders as woud freely sell their Fathers, their Elder Brothers, and even the Wives of their bosomes, if they cou'd black their faces and get anything by them.

I entirely agree with your Lord^{sh} in the Detestation you seem to have for that Diabolical Liquor Rum, which dos more mischeif to Peoples Industry and morals than any thing except Gin and the Pope. And if it were not a little too Poetical, I shoud fancy, as the Gods of Old were said to quaff Nectar, so the Devils are fobbd off with Rumm. Tho' my Dear Country Men woud think this unsavory Spirit much too Good for Devils, because they are fonder of it than they are of their Wives and Children, for they often sell the Bread out of their mouths, to buy Rumm to put in their own. Thrice happy Georgia, if it be in the power of any Law to keep out so great an enemy to Health Industry and Vertue! The new Settlers there had much better plant Vineyards like Noah, and get drunk with their own Wine. . . .

TO FRANKY OTWAY

The boy to whom this letter was addressed was the son of Colonel Francis Otway, who had married a sister of Mrs. Byrd. "Your Couzen Billy" was William Byrd III.

WESTOVER the 16th of February 1740.

I am not a little delighted with my dear Godsons Letter, writ in so plain a Hand, that he that runs might read it, & old Parr at an Hundred and Fifty might have conned it over with-out Spectacles. You being, Sir, so mighty glad that you were got to Westminster School was perhaps because it was a new thing, & would help you to abundance of Play Fellows. But if you continue in the same note next year, I shall have good Hopes of you, that you will make good use of your Time. Be sure never let it be said, that your Back, is forct to suffer for the Defects of your

Head & if you shoud ever come to ride the Still Horse, don't let it be on any account of your Book, but for some Sprightly action, or gaiety of Heart. Your Couzen Billy threshes hard at his Studys, for fear you shoud pose Him, when He comes to England. So many of our youngsters have dyed lately of the Small Pox there, that his Mother, would be in agonys to send Him very soon, However when he dos come, you will be so good as to shew Him the Lions, & introduce Him into other good Company. In the meantime I hope you will constantly correspond by Letter & thereby become acquainted & be as Dear Friends, as if you had played Truant & robbed Orchards together an Hundred Times. Adieu my Dear boy, may you grow in Grace, and in Learning & be an ornament to your Country, & Comfort to your Parents, & a Pleasure to your aff Uncle & God Father.

INAMORATO [.] L'OISEAUX*

(about 1704; 1942)

Among Byrd's newly discovered writings there are a number of "characters," which represent a literary type popular in seventeenth-century England. In "Inamorato" Byrd drew what seems to be a fairly accurate portrait of himself in the role of a lover. "L'Oiseaux"—a slip of the pen for "L'Oiseau"—identifies Inamorato as Byrd. In reprinting the essay it has seemed unnecessary to employ italics to indicate the numerous sentences underscored in the original manuscript, which is in the Library of the University of North Carolina.

Never did the sun shine upon a Swain who had more combustible matter in his constitution than the unfortunate Inamorato. Love broke out upon him before his Beard, and he cou'd distinguish sexes long before he cou'd tell the difference betwixt Good & Evil. Tis well he had not a Twin-sister as Osyris had, for without doubt like him he wou'd have had an amourette with her in his mothers belly. Love was born to him so long before Reason, that it has ever since slighted its rebukes, as much as old Fopps do the good sence of a young man. However this Frailty has never been without some check, For Diana threw such a Weight of Grace into the opposite scale, that the Ballance has commonly been held very

* Reprinted from *Another Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover*, by permission of the publishers, The Dietz Press, of Richmond, Virginia.

even. And if the Love-scale had happen'd to be carry'd down sometimes, the Counterpoise has not fail'd to mount it up again very suddenly. The struggle between the Senate and the Plebeians in the Roman Commonwealth, or betwixt the King and the Parliament in England, was never half so violent as the Civil war between this Hero's Principles and his Inclinations. Sometimes Grace wou'd be uppermost and sometimes Love, neither wou'd yield and neither cou'd conquer. Like Cesar and Pompey one cou'd not bear an Equal nor t'other a superior. It must be confessed indeed, His Principles have been sometimes happily supported by the misadventures of his Love, by ^{wh} means its own cannot have been turn'd against it self. This Foible has been an unhappy Clogg to all his Fortunes, and hinder'd him From reaching that Eminence in the World, which his Friends and his Abilitys might possibly have advanc'd him to. Nature gave him all the Talents in the World for business except Industry, which of all others is the most necessary. This is the the spring and life and spirit of all preferment, and makes a man bustle thro all difficulty, and foil all opposition. Laziness mires a man in the degree in which he was born, and clogs the wheels of the finest qualifications. Fortune may make a Lazy Fellow great: but he will never make himself so. Diligence gives Wings to ambition by which it soars up to the highest pitch of advancement. These Wings Inamorato wanted, as he did constancy, which is another ingredient to raise a great Fortune. To What purpose is it for a man to be always upon the wing, if he only fly backward and forward. He must go right out or else he will never go far. He shou'd fix one certain end in his own thoughts, and towards that all his designs, and all his motions shou'd unalterably tend. But poor Inamorato had too much mercury to fix to one thing. His Brain was too hot to jogg on eternally in the same dull road. He liv'd more by the lively movement of his Passions, than by the cold and unromantick dictates of Reason. This made him wavering in his Resolutions, and inconstant after he had taken them. He wou'd follow a scent with great eagerness for a little while, but then a fresh scent wou'd cross it and carry him as violently another way. One while the ease with which the Judges loll in their Coaches and doze upon the Bench, tempted him to study the Law: but he was soon taken off by the rapine and mercenariness

of that Profession. Then the Gaity of St James's made him fancy to be a Courteour: but the falseness and treachery, the envy and corruption in fashion there quickly made him abandon that pursuit. When this fit was over he was charm'd with the Glory of serving in the army, and thought it a shame for a proper Fellow to live at home in ease, when the Libertys of Europe were in danger: but before he had provided his Equipage, he was discourag'd by the confinement, dependance—barbarity of that service. In some frolicks no state appear'd so happy to him as matrimony, the convenience, the tenderness the society of that condition, made him resolve upon his own ruine, and set up for a Wife. He fancy'd it too sullen too splenatique to continue single, and too liable to the inconveniences that attend accidental and promiscuous gallantry. In this humour he'd work himself violently in love with some nymph of good sence, whose Understanding forsooth might keep under all the impertinent starts of a Womans temper. And when he was in love no man ever made so disingaging a figure. Instead of that life and gaity, that freedom and pushing confidence which hits the Ladys, he wou'd look as dismal as if he appear'd before his Judge, and not his mistress. Venus and all the Graces wou'd leave him in the lurch in the critical time when they shou'd have assisted him most. When he ought to have had the most fire he had the most flegm, and he was all form and constraint when he shou'd have the most freedom and spirit. He wou'd look like a fool, & talk like a Philosopher, when both his Eys and his Tongue shou'd have sparkled with wit and wagery. He wou'd sigh as ruefully as if he sat over a dead freind, and not a live mistress. No wonder this awkward conduct was without success for what woman wou'd venture upon a solemn swain that lookt more like her Confessor than her Gallant, and put her more in mind of a sullen Husband than a sprightly lover? The miscarriage of an honourable amour never disturb'd him so much, but that he wou'd sleep and look much better in his despair, than he did in the hottest of his Expectation. He was not in half the jeopardy of hanging himself when he lost a mistress, that he was while he was in danger of getting her. While there was hopes he wou'd be assiduous to a fault, not considering that a little neglect in love (like saltpetre in Gunpowder) serves to give force to y^e Passion. Whenever his bashfulness gave him

ave to declare his mind something wou'd rise in
 is throat and intercept the untimely Question.
 Woman is with more ease deliver'd of a huge
 oy, than he was of the painfull secret. His Ey-
 alls wou'd roul with as much gastliness as if he
 ad been strangled. Twas melancholly to see how
 is heart panted, his spirits flutter'd, his hands
 rembled, his knees knockt against one another,
 nd the whole machine was in a deplorable con-
 usion. You may guess how ingageing a Dec-
 oration must be that was attended with so many
 orrowfull symptomes. It moved the Nymphs
 ity at least, if it cou'd not move her inclina-
 ion. If she cou'd not be kind to a man to
 home she had created so much disturbance,
 et she cou'd not forbear being civil. Thus
 whenever Inamorato lost a mistress, he got a
 eind by way of equivalent, and so Providence
 ade a good Bargain for him when he wou'd
 ave made a wofull one for himself. His Person
 as agreable enough tho he had a certain cast
 f pride in his look, which clouded some of the
 race of it. Hardly any body likt him that did
 ot know him, and nobody hated him that did.
 e had almost as many freinds as he had
 acquaintance and nobody ever fell out with him
 or any other reason: but because they thought
 e neglected them.

His conversation was easy, sensible and in-
 ffensive, never bordering either upon pro-
 ane[ne]ss, or indecency. He was always tender
 f the modesty of those that were present, and
 f the reputation of those that were absent. He
 was incapable of saying a shocking thing, or of
 cting an unjust one. He was the never failing
 eind of y^e unfortunate, and good nature was
 he constantest of all his virtues. He pay'd his
 Court more to obscure merit, than to corrupt
 reatness. He never cou'd flatter any body, no
 ot himself, which were two invincible bars to
 ll preferment. He was much readyer to tell peo-
 ple of their faults, than their fine qualitys, be-
 ause they were already too sensible of these,
 whereas they were too ignorant of the first. His
 oul is so tun'd to those things that are right,
 hat he is too ready to be moved at those that are
 wrong. This makes him passionate, and sorely
 ensible of Injuriys, but he punishes himself more
 y the resentment than he dos the Party by
 evenge. If the sun go down upon his wrath twill
 e sure to rise upon his reconciliation. An Injury
 ever festers or rankles upon his mind: but wasts

its self in the First sally of indignation. He is
 frugal in all Expences upon himself, that he may
 be generous to the Distress. He takes more pleas-
 ure to supply the wants of others than his own
 5 Wantoness. His religion is more in substance
 than in form, and he is more forward to practice
 vertue than profess it. He is sincere to an in-
 discretion himself, and therefore abhors dis-
 simulation in other people. He can sooner be
 10 reconcil'd to a professt Enemy than to a pre-
 tended Freind. Of all cheats in the world he has
 least charity for the Holy Cheat, that makes
 Religion bawd for his Interest and serves the
 Devil in the Livery of Godliness. His memory is
 15 in nothing so punctual as in performing of
 Promises. He thinks himself as firmly bound by
 his Word as by his hand & seal, and wou'd be as
 much asham'd to be put in mind of one, as to be
 sue'd for the other. He knows the World per-
 20 fectly well, and thinks himself a citizen of it
 without the [illegible] distinctions of kindred
 sect or Country. He has learning without ostenta-
 tion. By Reading he's acquainted with ages past,
 and with the present by voyageing & conversa-
 25 tion, He knew how to keep company with Rakes
 without being infected by their Vices, and had
 the secret of giveing Virtue so good a grace that
 Wit it self cou'd not made it ridiculous. He cou'd
 return from one of the Convents in Drury Lane
 30 with as much innocence, as any of the saints from
 a meeting. He Lov'd to undress wickedness of all
 its paint, and disguise, that he might loath its
 deformity. His discretion never gave him an op-
 portunity to try his courage, for he wou'd never
 35 provoke a [illegible] sober man, nor be provokt
 by a man in drink. He never interlop't with an-
 others wife or mistress, but dealt altogether
 where the Trade was open & free for all Adven-
 turers. If he reflected upon any one t'was by
 40 Irony, which a wise man wou'd take for a banter,
 and a fool for a complement. His Tongue was so
 far from embroiling the rest of his Person that
 upon some occasions it has happily protected it.
 He abhors all excesses of strong drink because it
 45 wholly removes those Guards that can defend a
 man from doing & suffering Harm. He's a great
 Freind to temperance, because tis the security of
 all the other virtues. It disarms Flesh & bloud
 of those Tempests wth which it puts out all the
 50 lights of Reason. By talking little he is quit of a
 World of Folly & repentance. His silence pro-
 ceeds not from want of matter, but from plenty

of discretion. He is so great a freind to exactness, that he sometimes allows too little to the frailty of mankind. He wishes every body so perfect, that he overlooks the impossibility of reaching it in this World. He wou'd have men Angells before their time, and wou'd bring down that perfection upon Earth which is the peculiar priviledge of Heaven. This makes him a little too severe upon Faults, which it wou'd not be unjust to forgive. However he wou'd not have Transgressors punisht to procure them pain, but reformation. It proceeds from his hatred of the fault, and not of the offender. He loves retirement, that while he is acquainted with the world, he may not be a stranger to himself. Too much company distracts his thoughts, and hinders him from digesting his observations into good sence. It makes a man superficial, penetrating no deeper than the surface of things. One notice crowds out another, haveing no time to sink into the mind A constant hurry of visits & conversation gives a man a habit of inadvertency, which betrays him into faults without measure & without end. For this reason he commonly reserv'd the morning to himself, and bestow'd the rest upon his business and his freinds. He often frequented the company of Women, not so much to improve his

mind as to polish his behaviour. There is something in female conversation, that softens the roughness, tames the wildness & refines the indecency too common amongst the men. He laid it down as a maxime that without the Ladys, a schollar is a Pedant, a Philosopher a Cynick, all morality is morose, & all behaviour either too Formal or too licentious He has an excellent talent at keeping a secret, which neither love nor resentment, Vanity nor lightness can ever draw from him. All the ingenious tortures of the Inquisition cant force him to betray either his Faith, or his Freind. He always thought Ingratitude the most monstrous of all the vices, because it makes a man unfit for society, which subsists by mutual returns of kindness. His good-nature is so universal as to extend to all Brute creatures. He can not see them ill us'd without the tenderest sentiments of compassion. They are helpless and must submit to all sorts of tyranny while men have some way or other of righting themselves. They have no refuge, no freind, no laws to protect them from injury, but are liable to suffer by the neglect, the wantonness, and cruelty of men. This hard fate he bemoans with a very sensible concern, and the rather, because they have often more merit than their oppressors.

THE HISTORY OF THE DIVIDING LINE (1841)

[March] 25. [1728] The Air was chill'd this Morning with a Smart North-west Wind, which favour'd the Dismalites in their Dirty March. They return'd by the Path they had made in coming out, and with great Industry arriv'd in the Evening at the Spot where the Line had been discontinued.

After so long and laborious a Journey, they were glad to repose themselves on their couches of Cypress-bark, where their sleep was as sweet as it wou'd have been on a Bed of Finland Down.

In the mean time, we who stay'd behind had nothing to do, but to make the best observations we cou'd upon that Part of the Country. The Soil of our Landlord's Plantation, tho' none of the best, seem'd more fertile than any thereabouts, where the Ground is near as Sandy as the Desarts of Affrica, and consequently barren. The Road leading from thence to Edenton, be-

THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE LINE (1929) *

25. The Air was chill'd with a N. Wester which favour'd our Dismalites who enter'd the Desert very early. It was not so kind to Meanwell who unreasonably kick't off the Bed Clothes, & catch't An Ague. We killed the Time, by that great help to disagreeable Society, a Pack of Cards. Our Landlord had not the Good Fortune to please Firebrand with our Dinner, but surely when People do their best, a reasonable Man wou'd be satisfy'd. But he endeavour'd to mend his Entertainment by making hot Love to Ruth, who wou'd by no means be charm'd either with his Perswasion, or his Person. While the Master was employ'd in making Love to one Sister, the man made his Passion known to the other, Only he was more boisterous, & employ'd force, when

* The selections from *The Secret History* are reprinted by permission of Professor W. K. Boyd and the North Carolina Historical Commission.

ing in distance about 27 Miles, lies upon a Ridge call'd Sandy-Ridge, which is so wretchedly Poor that it will not bring Potatoes.

The Pines in this Part of the country are of a different Species from those that grow in Virginia: their bearded Leaves are much longer and their Cones much larger. Each Cell contains a Seed of the Size and Figure of a black-ey'd Pea, which, Shedding in November, is very good Mast for Hogs, and fattens them in a Short time.

The smallest of these Pines are full of Cones, which are 8 or 9 Inches long, and each affords commonly 60 or 70 Seeds. This Kind of Mast has the Advantage of all other, by being more constant, and less liable to be nippt by the Frost, or Eaten by the Caterpillars. The Trees also abound more with Turpentine, and consequently yield more Tarr, than either the Yellow or the White Pine; And for the same reason make more durable Timber for building The Inhabitants hereabouts pick up Knots of Lightwood in Abundance, which they burn into tar, and then carry it to Norfolk or Nansimond for a Market. The Tar made in this method is the less Valuable, because it is said to burn the Cordage, tho' it is full as good for all other uses, as that made in Sweden and Muscovy.

Surely there is no place in the World where the Inhabitants live with less Labour than in N Carolina. It approaches nearer to the Description of Lubberland than any other, by the great felicity of the Climate, the easiness of raising Provisions, and the Slothfulness of the People.

Indian Corn is of so great increase, that a little Pains will Subsist a very large Family with Bread, and then they may have meat without any pains at all, by the Help of the Low Grounds, and the great Variety of Mast that grows on the Highland. The Men, for their Parts, just like the Indians, impose all the Work upon the poor Women. They make their Wives rise out of their Beds early in the Morning, at the same time that they lye and Snore, till the Sun has run one third of his course, and disperst all the unwholesome Damps. Then, after Stretching and Yawning for half an Hour, they light their Pipes, and, under the Protection of a cloud of Smoak, venture out into the open Air; tho', if it happens to be never so little cold, they quickly return Shivering into the Chimney corner. When the weather is mild, they stand leaning with both their arms upon the corn-field fence, and gravely consider whether

he cou'd not succeed by fair means Tho' one of the men rescu'd the poor Girl from this violent Lover; but was so much his Friend as to keep the shamefull Secret from those, whose Duty it wou'd have been to punish such Violations of Hospitality. Nor was this the only one this disorderly fellow was guilty of, for he broke open a House where our Landlord kept the Fodder for his own use, upon the belief that it was better than what he allow'd us. This was in compliment to his Master's Horses I hope, & not in blind obedience to any order he receiv'd from him.

they had best go and take a Small Heat at the Hough. but generally find reasons to put it off till another time.

Thus they loiter away their Lives, like Solomon's Sluggard, with their Arms across, and at the Winding up of the Year Scarcely have Bread to Eat.

To speak the Truth, tis a thorough Aversion to Labor that makes People file off to N Carolina, where Plenty and a Warm Sun confirm them in their Disposition to Laziness for their whole Lives.

26. Since we were like to be confin'd to this place, till the People return'd out of the Dismal, twas agreed that our Chaplain might Safely take a turn to Edenton, to preach the Gospel to the Infidels there, and Christen their Children. He was accompany'd thither by Mr. Little, One of the Carolina Commissioners, who, to shew his regard for the Church, offer'd to treat Him on the Road with a Fricassee of Rum. They fry'd half a dozen Rashers of very fat Bacon in a Pint of Rum, both which being disht up together, serv'd the Company at once for meat and Drink.

Most of the Rum they get in this Country comes from New England, and is so bad and unwholesome, that it is not improperly call'd "Kill-Devil." It is distill'd there from foreign molasses, which, if Skilfully manag'd, yields near Gallon for Gallon. Their molasses comes from the same country, and has the name of "Long Sugar" in Carolina, I suppose from the Ropiness of it, and Serves all the purposes of Sugar, both in their Eating and Drinking.

When they entertain their Friends bountifully, they fail not to set before them a Capacious Bowl of Bombo, so call'd from the Admiral of that name. This is a Compound of Rum and Water in Equal Parts, made palatable with the said long Sugar. As good Humour begins to flow, and the Bowl to Ebb, they take care to replenish it with Shear Rum, of which there always is a Reserve under the Table. But such Generous doings happen only when that Balsam of Life is plenty; for they have often such Melancholy times, that neither Land-graves nor Casicks can procure one drop for their Wives, when they ly in, or are troubled with the Colick or Vapours. Very few in this Country have the Industry to plant Orchards, which, in a Dearth of Rum, might supply them with much better Liquor.

26. I persuaded Meanwell¹ to take a Vomit of Ipocoacana which workt very kindly; I took all the care of him I cou'd, tho' Firebrand was so unfriendly as not to step once up Stairs to visit him. I also gave a Vomit to a poor Shoemaker that belong'd to my Landlord, by which he reap't great benefit. Puzzlecause made a Journey to Edenton, & took our Chaplain with him to preach the Gospel to the Infidels of that Town, & to baptize some of their Children. I began to entertain with my Chocolate, which every body commended, but only he that commends nothing that don't belong to himself. In the Evening I took a Solitary walk, that I might have Leizure to think on my absent Friends, which I now grew impatient to see. Orion stuck as close to his Patron Firebrand, as the Itch does to the Fingers of many of his Country Folks.

¹ The names in this paragraph are all fictitious. Dr. Boyd identifies "Meanwell" and "Firebrand" as William Dandrige and Richard Fitz-William, Virginia commissioners. "Puzzlecause" is Edward Moseley, one of the North Carolina commissioners; and "Orion," one of the Virginia surveyors. In *The Secret History* Byrd refers to the Virginia chaplain, the Reverend Peter Fountain (or Fontaine), as "Dr. Humdrum."

The Truth is, there is one Inconvenience that easily discourages lazy People from making This improvement. very often, in Autumn, when the Apples begin to ripen, they are visited with Numerous Flights of paraqueets, that bite all the Fruit to Pieces in a moment, for the sake of the 5
 Kernels The Havock they make is Sometimes so great, that whole Orchards are laid waste in Spite of all the Noises that can be made, or Mawkins that can be dresst up, to fright 'em away. These 10
 Ravenous Birds visit North Carolina only during the warm Season, and so soon as the Cold begins to come on, retire back towards the Sun. They rarely Venture so far North as Virginia, except in a very hot Summer, when they visit the most 15
 Southern Parts of it. They are very Beautiful; but like some other pretty Creatures, are apt to be loud and mischievous.

27. Betwixt this and Edenton there are many thuckleberry Slashes, which afford a convenient 20
 Harbour for Wolves and Foxes. The first of these wild Beasts is not so large and fierce as they are in other countries more Northerly. He will not attack a Man in the keenest of his Hunger, but run away from him, as from an Animal more 25
 mischievous than himself.

The Foxes are much bolder, and will Sometimes not only make a Stand, but likewise assault any one that would balk them of their Prey. The Inhabitants hereabouts take the 30
 trouble to dig abundance of Wolf-Pits, so deep and perpendicular, that when a Wolf is once tempted into them, he can no more Scramble out again, than a Husband who has taken the Leap can Scramble out of Matrimony.

Most of the Houses in this Part of the Country are Log-houses, covered with Pine or Cypress Shingles, 3 feet long, and one broad. They are hung upon Laths with Peggs, and their doors too turn upon Wooden Hinges, and have wooden 40
 Locks to Secure them, so that the Building is finisht without Nails or other Iron-Work. They also set up their Pales without any Nails at all, and indeed more Securely than those that are nail'd. There are 3 Rails mortised into the Posts, 45
 the lowest of which serves as a Sill with a Groove in the Middle, big enough to receive the End of the Pales; the middle Part of the Pale rests against the Inside of the Next Rail, and the Top of it is brought forward to the outside of the uppermost. Such Wreathing of the Pales in and 50
 out makes them stand firm, and much harder

27. Tho' it threaten'd Rain both Yesterday & today, yet Heaven was so kind to our Friends in the Dismal as to keep it from Falling. I perswaded Meanwell to take the Bark, which He did with good effect, tho' he continued very faint & low-Spirited. He took Firebrand's Neglect in great Dudgeon, and amidst all his good Nature cou'd not forbear a great deal of Resentment; but I won his Heart entirely by the tender Care I took of him in his illness. I also gain'd the Men's Affection by dressing their wounds, & giving them little Remedys for their complaints. Nor was I less in my Landlords Books, for acting the Doctor in his Family. Tho' I observ'd some Distempers in it, that were past my Skill to cure. For his Wife & Heir Apparent were so enclin'd to a cheerfull Cup, that our Liquor was very unsafe in their keeping. I had a long time observed that they made themselves happy every day, before the Sun had run one third of his course, which no doubt gave some uneasiness to the Old Gentleman: but Custome that reconciles most Evils, made him bear it with Christian Patience.

As to the Young Gentleman, he seem'd to be as worthless as any homebred Squire I had ever met with, & much the worse for having a good Opinion of himself. His good Father intended him for the Mathematicks, but he never cou'd rise higher in that Study than to gage a Rum Cask. His Sisters are very sensible Industrious Damsels, who tho' they see Gentlemen but Seldom, have the Grace to resist their Importunitys, & tho' they are innocently free, will

to unfix than when nail'd in the Ordinary way.

Within 3 or 4 Miles of Edenton, the Soil appears to be a little more fertile, tho' it is much cut with Slashes, which seem all to have a tendency towards the Dismal.

This Town is Situate on the North side of Albermarle Sound, which is there about 5 miles over. A Dirty Slash runs all along the Back of it, which in the Summer is a foul annoyance, and furnishes abundance of that Carolina plague, musquetas. There may be 40 or 50 Houses, most of them Small, and built without Expense. A Citizen here is counted Extravagant, if he has Ambition enough to aspire to a Brick-chimney. Justice herself is but indifferently Lodged, the Court-House having much the Air of a Common Tobacco-House. I believe this is the only Metropolis in the Christian or Mahometan World, where there is neither Church, Chappel, Mosque, Synagogue, or any other Place of Publick Worship of any Sect or Religion whatsoever.

What little Devotion there may happen to be is much more private than their vices. The People seem easy without a Minister, as long as they are exempted from paying Him. Sometimes the Society for propagating the Gospel has had the Charity to send over Missionaries to this Country; but unfortunately the Priest has been too Lewd² for the people, or, which oftener happens, they too lewd for the Priest. For these Reasons these Reverend Gentlemen have always left their Flocks as arrant Heathen as they found them. Thus much however may be said for the Inhabitants of Edenton, that not a Soul has the least taint of Hypocrisy, or Superstition, acting very Frankly and above-board in all their Excesses.

Provisions here are extremely cheap, and extremely good, so that People may live plentifully at a trifling expense. Nothing is dear but Law, Physick, and Strong Drink, which are all bad in their Kind, and the last they get with so much Difficulty, that they are never guilty of the Sin of Suffering it to Sour upon their Hands. Their Vanity generally lies not so much in having a handsome Dining-Room, as a Handsome House of Office: in this Kind of Structure they are really extravagant.

They are rarely guilty of Flattering or making indulge them in no dangerous Libertys. However

their cautious Father having some Notion of Female Frailty, from what he observed in their Mother, never suffers them to lie out of his own Chamber.

² Ignorant; base.

any Court to their governors, but treat them
 with all the Excesses of Freedom and Familiarity.
 They are of Opinion their rulers wou'd be apt
 to grow insolent, if they grew Rich, and for that
 reason take care to keep them poorer, and more 5
 dependent, if possible, than the Saints in New
 England used to do their Governors. They have
 very little coin, so they are forced to carry on
 their Home-Traffick with Paper-Money. This is
 the only Cash that will tarry in the Country, 10
 and for that reason the Discount goes on in-
 creasing between that and real Money, and will
 do so to the End of the Chapter.

JONATHAN EDWARDS

1703 - 1758

Having produced him, the Americans need not despair of their metaphysicians. We do not scruple to say, that he is one of the acutest, most powerful, and, of all reasoners, the most conscientious and sincere.

—WILLIAM HAZLITT in the *Edinburgh Review*, October, 1829.

Jonathan Edwards, greatest of American theologians, was a native of Connecticut, then a stronghold of conservatism. He was a precocious youth, and at the age of fourteen he read with eager interest John Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding*. He graduated from Yale in 1720 and spent two additional years there in the study of theology. In 1726 he became assistant pastor, at Northampton, Mass., to his grandfather, the Rev. Solomon Stoddard. In 1729, when Stoddard died, Edwards became sole pastor. A religious revival at Northampton was the forerunner of the Great Awakening, which was felt on both sides of the Atlantic. This was the time of George Whitefield's visit to America. For a time secular tendencies were checked, and Edwards hoped for a permanent return to the religious zeal of the early Puritans. Reaction set in, however, and Edwards was dismissed by his congregation in 1750. From 1751 to 1757 he preached to the Indians at Stockbridge. In the latter year he was elected President of Nassau Hall (Princeton). He died the next year of smallpox.

All his life Edwards was a student and a writer. Had he chosen, he might have become a literary figure of considerable importance. In him one finds a rare combination of the logician and the mystic. He gave his best efforts to the defense of Calvinism, which was losing ground throughout the colonies. His most famous work is a treatise on the *Freedom of the Will*

(1754), probably the most notable work produced by an American theologian. His most famous sermon is "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," preached at Enfield, Mass., in 1741. His "Personal Narrative" is a classic of its kind, worthy of a place beside John Bunyan's *Grace Abounding* and Tolstoy's *My Confession*. "Sarah Pierrepont" is an account of the woman whom Edwards was to marry in 1727. His "Narrative of Surprising Conversions" gives a vivid account of the religious revival in Northampton. From this we have reprinted the story of the four-year-old convert, Phebe Bartlet. Perhaps we should remind the casual reader that Phebe was no typical Puritan child and was quite unlike the other children mentioned in Edwards's account of her conversion.

There are biographies of Edwards by A. V. G. Allen (1889), H. B. Parkes (1930), A. C. McGiffert (1932), and Ola Elizabeth Winslow (1940); the last is the best. Clarence H. Faust and Thomas H. Johnson edited for the American Writers Series in 1935 a useful volume of selections with introduction, notes, and bibliography. See also Mr. Johnson's *The Printed Writings of Jonathan Edwards* (1943) and Orville A. Hitchcock's chapter in W. N. Brigance (ed.), *A History and Criticism of American Public Address* (1943). An able but unsympathetic essay on Edwards appears in Volume VIII of the *Works* of Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes.

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

(about 1740)

I had a variety of concerns and exercises about my soul from my childhood; but had two more remarkable seasons of awakening, before I met with that change by which I was brought to those new dispositions, and that new sense of things, that I have since had. The first time was when I was a boy, some years before I went to college, at a time of remarkable awakening in my father's congregation. I was then very much affected for many months, and concerned about the things of religion, and my soul's salvation; and was abundant in duties. I used to pray five times a day in secret, and to spend much time in religious talk with other boys, and used to meet with them to pray together. I experienced I know not what kind of delight in religion. My mind was much engaged in it, and had much self-righteous pleasure; and it was my delight to abound in religious duties. I with some of my schoolmates joined together, and built a booth in a swamp, in a very retired spot, for a place of prayer. And besides, I had particular secret places of my own in the woods, where I used to retire by myself; and was from time to time much affected. My affections seemed to be lively and easily moved, and I seemed to be in my element

when engaged in religious duties. And I am ready to think, many are deceived with such affections, and such a kind of delight as I then had in religion, and mistake it for grace.

5 But in process of time, my convictions and affections wore off; and I entirely lost all those affections and delights and left off secret prayer, at least as to any constant performance of it, and returned like a dog to his vomit, and went on in the ways of sin. Indeed I was at times very
10 uneasy, especially towards the latter part of my time at college; when it pleased God, to seize me with the pleurisy; in which he brought me nigh to the grave, and shook me over the pit of hell. And yet, it was not long after my recovery, before
15 I fell again into my old ways of sin. But God would not suffer me to go on with my quietness; I had great and violent inward struggles, till, after many conflicts, with wicked inclinations, repeated resolutions, and bonds that I laid myself under by a kind of vows to God, I was
20 brought wholly to break off all former wicked ways, and all ways of known outward sin; and to apply myself to seek salvation, and practice many religious duties; but without that kind of
25 affection and delight which I had formerly experienced. My concern now wrought more by inward struggles and conflicts, and self-reflections. I made seeking my salvation the main busi-

ness of my life. But yet, it seems to me, I sought after a miserable manner; which has made me sometimes since to question, whether ever it issued in that which was saving; being ready to doubt, whether such miserable seeking ever succeeded. I was indeed brought to seek salvation in a manner that I never was before; I felt a spirit to part with all things in the world, for an interest in Christ.—My concern continued and prevailed, with many exercising thoughts and inward struggles; but yet it never seemed to be proper to express that concern by the name of terror.

From my childhood up, my mind had been full of objections against the doctrine of God's sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased; leaving them eternally to perish, and be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well, when I seemed to be convinced, and fully satisfied, as to this sovereignty of God, and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men, according to his sovereign pleasure. But [I] never could give an account, how, or by what means, I was thus convinced, not in the least imagining at the time, nor a long time after, that there was any extraordinary influence of God's Spirit in it; but only that now I saw further, and my reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it. However, my mind rested in it; and it put an end to all those cavils and objections. And there has been a wonderful alteration in my mind, with respect to the doctrine of God's sovereignty, from that day to this; so that I scarce ever have found so much as the rising of an objection against it, in the most absolute sense, in God's shewing mercy to whom he will shew mercy, and hardening whom he will. God's absolute sovereignty and justice, with respect to salvation and damnation, is what my mind seems to rest assured of, as much as of any thing that I see with my eyes; at least it is so at times. But I have often, since that first conviction, had quite another kind of sense of God's sovereignty than I had then. I have often since had not only a conviction, but a delightful conviction. The doctrine has very often appeared exceeding pleasant, bright, and sweet.

Absolute sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to God. But my first conviction was not so.

The first instance that I remember of that sort of inward, sweet delight in God and divine

things that I have lived much in since, was on reading those words, 1 Tim. i. 17. *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever, Amen.*

5 As I read the words, there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the Divine Being; a new sense, quite different from any thing I ever experienced before. Never any words of scripture seemed to me as these words did. I thought within myself, how excellent a being that was, and how happy I should be if I might enjoy that God, and be wrapt up in heaven, and be as it were swallowed up in him forever! I kept saying, and as it were singing over these words of scripture to myself; and went to pray to God that I might enjoy him, and prayed in a manner quite different from what I used to do; with a new sort of affection. But it never came into my thought, that there was any thing spiritual, or of a saving nature in this.

From about that time, I began to have a new kind of apprehensions and ideas of Christ, and the work of redemption, and the glorious way of salvation by him. An inward, sweet sense of these things, at times, came into my heart; and my soul was led away in pleasant views and contemplations of them. And my mind was greatly engaged to spend my time in reading and meditating on Christ, on the beauty and excellency of his person, and the lovely way of salvation by free grace in him. I found no books so delightful to me, as those that treated of these subjects. Those words, Cant.¹ ii:1, used to be abundantly with me, *I am the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the valleys.* The words seemed to me, sweetly to represent the loveliness and beauty of Jesus Christ. The whole book of Canticles used to be pleasant to me, and I used to be much in reading it, about that time; and found, from time to time, an inward sweetness, that would carry me away, in my contemplations. This I know not how to express otherwise, than by a calm, sweet abstraction of soul from all the concerns of this world; and sometimes a kind of vision, or fixed ideas and imaginations, of being alone in the mountains, or some solitary wilderness, far from all mankind, sweetly conversing with Christ, and wrapt and swallowed up in God. The sense I had of divine things, would often of a sudden kindle up, as it were, a sweet burning in my heart; an ardor of soul, that I know not how to express.

¹ Canticles; the Song of Solomon.

Not long after I began to experience these things, I gave an account to my father of some things that had passed in my mind. I was pretty much affected by the discourse we had together; and when the discourse was ended, I walked abroad alone, in a solitary place in my father's pasture for contemplation. And as I was walking there and looking up on the sky and clouds, there came into my mind so sweet a sense of the glorious *majesty* and *grace* of God, that I know not how to express. I seemed to see them both in a sweet conjunction; majesty and meekness joined together; it was a gentle, and holy majesty; and also a majestic meekness; a high, great, and holy gentleness.

After this my sense of divine things gradually increased, and became more and more lively, and had more of that inward sweetness. The appearance of every thing was altered; there seemed to be, as it were, a calm, sweet cast, or appearance of divine glory, in almost every thing. God's excellency, his wisdom, his purity and love, seemed to appear in every thing; in the sun, moon, and stars; in the clouds, and blue sky; in the grass, flowers, trees; in the water, and all nature; which used greatly to fix my mind. I often used to sit and view the moon for continuance; and in the day, spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God in these things; in the mean time, singing forth, with a low voice, my contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer. And scarce any thing, among all the works of nature, was so delightful to me as thunder and lightning; formerly, nothing had been so terrible to me. Before, I used to be uncommonly terrified with thunder, and to be struck with terror when I saw a thunder storm rising; but now, on the contrary, it rejoiced me. I felt God, so to speak, at the first appearance of a thunder storm; and used to take the opportunity, at such times, to fix myself in order to view the clouds, and see the lightnings play, and hear the majestic and awful voice of God's thunder, which oftentimes was exceedingly entertaining, leading me to sweet contemplations of my great and glorious God. While thus engaged, it always seemed natural to me to sing, or chant for my meditations; or, to speak my thoughts in soliloquies with a singing voice.

I felt then great satisfaction, as to my good state; but that did not content me. I had vehement longings of soul after God and Christ, and after more holiness, wherewith my heart

seemed to be full, and ready to break; which often brought to my mind the words of the Psalmist, Psal. cxix. 28. *My soul breaketh for the longing it hath* I often felt a mourning and lamenting in my heart, that I had not turned to God sooner, that I might have had more time to grow in grace. My mind was greatly fixed on divine things, almost perpetually in the contemplation of them. I spent most of my time in thinking of divine things, year after year; often walking alone in the woods, and solitary places, for meditation, soliloquy, and prayer, and converse with God; and it was always my manner, at such times, to sing forth my contemplations. I was almost constantly in ejaculatory prayer, wherever I was. Prayer seemed to be natural to me, as the breath by which the inward burnings of my heart had vent. The delights which I now felt in the things of religion, were of an exceedingly different kind from those before mentioned, that I had when a boy; and what I then had no more notion of, than one born blind has of pleasant and beautiful colors. They were of a more inward, pure, soul-animating and refreshing nature. Those former delights never reached the heart; and did not arise from any sight of the divine excellency of the things of God; or any taste of the soul-satisfying and life-giving good there is in them.

My sense of divine things seemed gradually to increase, until I went to preach at New York, which was about a year and a half after they began; and while I was there, I felt them, very sensibly, in a higher degree than I had done before. My longings after God and holiness, were much increased. Pure and humble, holy and heavenly Christianity, appeared exceedingly amiable to me. I felt a burning desire to be in every thing a complete Christian; and conform to the blessed image of Christ; and that I might live, in all things, according to the pure and blessed rules of the gospel. I had an eager thirsting after progress in these things; which put me upon pursuing and pressing after them. It was my continual strife day and night, and constant inquiry, how I should *be* more holy, and *live* more holily, and more becoming a child of God, and a disciple of Christ. I now sought an increase of grace and holiness, and a holy life, with much more earnestness, than ever I sought grace before I had it. I used to be continually examining myself, and studying and contriving for likely ways and means, how I should live holily, with far greater diligence and earnestness, than ever I pursued

any thing in my life; but yet with too great a dependence on my own strength; which afterwards proved a great damage to me. My experience had not then taught me, as it has done since, my extreme feebleness and impotence, every manner of way; and the bottomless depths of secret corruption and deceit there was in my heart. However, I went on with my eager pursuit after more holiness, and conformity to Christ.

The heaven I desired was a heaven of holiness; to be with God, and to spend my eternity in divine love, and holy communion with Christ. My mind was very much taken up with contemplations on heaven, and the enjoyments there, and living there in perfect holiness, humility and love. And it used at that time to appear a great part of the happiness of heaven, that there the saints could express their love to Christ. It appeared to me a great clog and burden, that what I felt within, I could not express as I desired. The inward ardor of my soul, seemed to be hundered and pent up, and could not freely flame out as it would. I used often to think, how in heaven this principle should freely and fully vent and express itself. Heaven appeared exceedingly delightful, as a world of love; and that all happiness consisted in living in pure, humble, heavenly, divine love.

I remember the thoughts I used then to have of holiness; and said sometimes to myself, "I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the gospel prescribes." It appeared to me, that there was nothing in it but what was ravishingly lovely; the highest beauty and amiableness—a *divine* beauty; far purer than any thing here upon earth; and that every thing else was like mire and defilement, in comparison of it.

Holiness, as I then wrote down some of my contemplations on it, appeared to me to be of a sweet, pleasant, charming, serene, calm nature; which brought an inexpressible purity, brightness, peacefulness and ravishment to the soul. In other words, that it made the soul like a field or garden of God, with all manner of pleasant flowers; all pleasant, delightful, and undisturbed; enjoying a sweet calm, and the gently vivifying beams of the sun. The soul of a true Christian, as I then wrote my meditations, appeared like such a little white flower as we see in the spring of the year; low and humble on the ground, opening its bosom to receive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory; rejoicing as it were in a calm rapture; diffusing around a sweet fragrancy; standing peace-

fully and lovingly, in the midst of other flowers round about; all in like manner opening their bosoms, to drink in the light of the sun. There was no part of creature holiness, that I had so great a sense of its loveliness, as humility, brokenness of heart and poverty of spirit; and there was nothing that I so earnestly longed for. My heart panted after this, to lie low before God, as in the dust; that I might be nothing, and that God might be ALL, that I might become as a little child.

While at New York, I was sometimes much affected with reflections on my past life, considering how late it was before I began to be truly religious; and how wickedly I had lived till then; and once so as to weep abundantly, and for a considerable time together.

On *January 12, 1723*, I made a solemn dedication of myself to God, and wrote it down; giving up myself, and all that I had to God; to be for the future in no respect my own; to act as one that had no right to himself, in any respect. And solemnly vowed to take God for my whole portion and felicity; looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were; and his law for the constant rule of my obedience; engaging to fight with all my might, against the world, the flesh and the devil, to the end of my life. But I have reason to be infinitely humbled, when I consider how much I have failed of answering my obligation.

I had then abundance of sweet religious conversation in the family where I lived, with Mr. John Smith and his pious mother. My heart was knit in affection to those in whom were appearances of true piety; and I could bear the thoughts of no other companions, but such as were holy, and the disciples of the blessed Jesus. I had great longings for the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world; and my secret prayer used to be, in great part, taken up in praying for it. If I heard the least hint of anything that happened, in any part of the world, that appeared, in some respect or other, to have a favorable aspect on the interest of Christ's kingdom, my soul eagerly caught at it; and it would much animate and refresh me. I used to be eager to read public news letters, mainly for that end; to see if I could not find some news favorable to the interest of religion in the world.

I very frequently used to retire into a solitary place, on the banks of Hudson's river, at some distance from the city, for contemplation on di-

vine things, and secret converse with God; and had many sweet hours there. Sometimes Mr. Smith and I walked there together, to converse on the things of God; and our conversation used to turn much on the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world, and the glorious things that God would accomplish for his church in the latter days. I had then, and at other times, the greatest delight in the holy scriptures, of any book whatsoever. Oftentimes in reading it, every word seemed to touch my heart. I felt a harmony between something in my heart, and those sweet and powerful words. I seemed often to see so much light exhibited by every sentence, and such a refreshing food communicated, that I could not get along in reading, often dwelling long on one sentence, to see the wonders contained in it; and yet almost every sentence seemed to be full of wonders.

I came away from New York in the month of April, 1723, and had a most bitter parting with Madam Smith and her son. My heart seemed to sink within me at leaving the family and city, where I had enjoyed so many sweet and pleasant days. I went from New York to Weathersfield, by water, and as I sailed away, I kept sight of the city as long as I could. However, that night, after this sorrowful parting, I was greatly comforted in God at Westchester, where we went ashore to lodge; and had a pleasant time of it all the voyage to Saybrook. It was sweet to me to think of meeting dear Christians in heaven, where we should never part more. At Saybrook we went ashore to lodge, on Saturday, and there kept the Sabbath; where I had a sweet and refreshing season, walking alone in the fields.

After I came home to Windsor, I remained much in a like frame of mind, as when at New York; only sometimes I felt my heart ready to sink with the thoughts of my friends at New York. My support was in contemplations on the heavenly state; as I find in my Diary of May 1, 1723. It was a comfort to think of that state, where there is fulness of joy; where reigns heavenly, calm, and delightful love, without alloy; where there are continually the dearest expressions of this love; where is the enjoyment of the persons loved, without ever parting; where those persons who appear so lovely in this world, will really be inexpressibly more lovely and full of love to us. And how sweetly will the mutual lovers join together to sing the praises of God and the Lamb! How will it fill us with joy to

think, that this enjoyment, these sweet exercises will never cease, but will last to all eternity! I continued much in the same frame, in the general, as when at New York, till I went to New Haven as tutor to the college; particularly once at Bolton, on a journey from Boston, while walking out alone in the fields. After I went to New Haven I sunk in religion; my mind being diverted from my eager pursuits after holiness, by some affairs that greatly perplexed and distracted my thoughts.

In September, 1725, I was taken ill at New Haven, and while endeavoring to go home to Windsor, was so ill at the North Village, that I could go no further; where I lay sick for about a quarter of a year. In this sickness God was pleased to visit me again with the sweet influences of his Spirit. My mind was greatly engaged there in divine, pleasant contemplations, and longings of soul. I observed that those who watched with me, would often be looking out wishfully for the morning; which brought to my mind those words of the Psalmist, and which my soul with delight made its own language, *My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning. I say, more than they that watch for the morning;* and when the light of day came in at the windows, it refreshed my soul from one morning to another. It seemed to be some image of the light of God's glory.

I remember, about that time, I used greatly to long for the conversion of some that I was concerned with; I could gladly honor them, and with delight be a servant to them, and lie at their feet, if they were but truly holy. But, some time after this, I was again greatly diverted in my mind with some temporal concerns that exceedingly took up my thoughts, greatly to the wounding of my soul; and went on through various exercises, that it would be tedious to relate, which gave me much more experience of my own heart, than ever I had before.

Since I came to this town,² I have often had sweet complacency in God, in views of his glorious perfections and the excellency of Jesus Christ. God has appeared to me a glorious and lovely being, chiefly on the account of his holiness. The holiness of God has always appeared to me the most lovely of all his attributes. The doctrines of God's absolute sovereignty, and free grace, in shewing mercy to whom he would shew mercy; and man's absolute dependance on the opera-

² Northampton, Mass.

tions of God's Holy Spirit, have very often appeared to me as sweet and glorious doctrines. These doctrines have been much my delight. God's sovereignty has ever appeared to me great part of his glory. It has often been my delight to approach God, and adore him as a sovereign God, and ask sovereign mercy of him.

I have loved the doctrines of the gospel; they have been to my soul like green pastures. The gospel has seemed to me the richest treasure; the treasure that I have most desired, and longed that it might dwell richly in me. The way of salvation by Christ has appeared, in a general way, glorious and excellent, most pleasant and most beautiful. It has often seemed to me, that it would in a great measure spoil heaven, to receive it in any other way. That text has often been affecting and delightful to me. Isa. xxxii:2. *A man shall be an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, &c.*

It has often appeared to me delightful, to be united to Christ; to have him for my head, and to be a member of his body; also to have Christ for my teacher and prophet. I very often think with sweetness, and longings, and pantings of soul, of being a little child, taking hold of Christ, to be led by him through the wilderness of this world. That text, Matth. xviii:3, has often been sweet to me, *except ye be converted and become as little children, &c.* I love to think of coming to Christ, to receive salvation of him, poor in spirit, and quite empty of self, humbly exalting him alone; cut off entirely from my own root, in order to grow into, and out of Christ; to have God in Christ to be all in all; and to live by faith on the Son of God, a life of humble unfeigned confidence in him. That scripture has often been sweet to me, Psal. cxv:1. *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake.* And those words of Christ, Luke x:21. *In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.* That sovereignty of God which Christ rejoiced in, seemed to me worthy of such joy; and that rejoicing seemed to show the excellency of Christ, and of what spirit he was.

Sometimes, only mentioning a single word caused my heart to burn within me; or only seeing the name of Christ, or the name of some attribute of God. And God has appeared glorious

to me, on account of the Trinity. It has made me have exalting thoughts of God, that he subsists in three persons. Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The sweetest joys and delights I have experienced, have not been those that have arisen from a hope of my own good estate; but in a direct view of the glorious things of the gospel. When I enjoy this sweetness, it seems to carry me above the thoughts of my own estate; it seems at such times a loss that I cannot bear, to take off my eye from the glorious pleasant object I behold without me, to turn my eye in upon myself, and my own good estate.

My heart has been much on the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world. The histories of the past advancement of Christ's kingdom have been sweet to me. When I have read histories of past ages, the pleasantest thing in all my reading has been, to read of the kingdom of Christ being promoted. And when I have expected, in my reading, to come to any such thing, I have rejoiced in the prospect, all the way as I read. And my mind has been much entertained and delighted with the scripture promises and prophecies, which relate to the future glorious advancement of Christ's kingdom upon earth.

I have sometimes had a sense of the excellent fulness of Christ, and his meetness and suitableness as a Saviour; whereby he has appeared to me, far above all, the chief of ten thousands. His blood and atonement have appeared sweet, and his righteousness sweet; which was always accompanied with ardency of spirit; and inward strugglings and breathings, and groanings that cannot be uttered, to be emptied of myself, and swallowed up in Christ.

Once as I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God, as Mediator between God and man, and his wonderful, great, full, pure and sweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condescension. This grace that appeared so calm and sweet, appeared also great above the heavens. The person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thought and conception—which continued, as near as I can judge, about an hour; which kept me the greater part of the time in a flood of tears, and weeping aloud. I felt an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express,

emptied and annihilated, to lie in the dust, and to be full of Christ alone; to love him with a holy and pure love; to trust in him; to live upon him, to serve and follow him; and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure, with a divine and heavenly purity. I have, several other times, had views very much of the same nature, and which have had the same effects.

I have many times had a sense of the glory of the third person in the Trinity, in his office of Sanctifier; in his holy operations, communicating divine light and life to the soul. God, in the communications of his Holy Spirit, has appeared as an infinite fountain of divine glory and sweetness; being full, and sufficient to fill and satisfy the soul; pouring forth itself in sweet communications; like the sun in its glory, sweetly and pleasantly diffusing light and life. And I have sometimes had an affecting sense of the excellency of the word of God, as a word of life, as the light of life; a sweet, excellent, life-giving word; accompanied with a thirsting after that word, that it might dwell richly in my heart.

Often, since I lived in this town, I have had very affecting views of my own sinfulness and vileness; very frequently to such a degree as to hold me in a kind of loud weeping, sometimes for a considerable time together; so that I have often been forced to shut myself up. I have had a vastly greater sense of my own wickedness, and the badness of my own heart, than ever I had before my conversion. It has often appeared to me, that if God should mark iniquity against me, I should appear the very worst of all mankind: of all that have been, since the beginning of the world to this time; and that I should have by far the lowest place in hell. When others, that have come to talk with me about their soul concerns, have expressed the sense they have had of their own wickedness, by saying that it seemed to them, that they were as bad as the devil himself; I thought their expression seemed exceedingly faint and feeble, to represent my wickedness.

My wickedness, as I am in myself, has long appeared to me perfectly ineffable, and swallowing up all thought and imagination; like an infinite deluge, or mountains over my head. I know not how to express better what my sins appear to me to be, than by heaping infinite upon infinite, and multiplying infinite by infinite. Very often, for these many years, these expressions are in my mind, and in my mouth, "Infinite upon infinite—Infinite upon infinite!" When I look into my

heart, and take a view of my wickedness, it looks like an abyss infinitely deeper than hell. And it appears to me, that were it not for free grace, exalted and raised up to the infinite height of all the fulness and glory of the great Jehovah, and the arm of his power and grace stretched forth in all the majesty of his power, and in all the glory of his sovereignty, I should appear sunk down in my sins below hell itself; far beyond the sight of every thing, but the eye of sovereign grace, that can pierce even down to such a depth. And yet, it seems to me, that my conviction of sin is exceedingly small, and faint, it is enough to amaze me, that I have no more sense of my sin. I know certainly, that I have very little sense of my sinfulness. When I have had turns of weeping and crying for my sins, I thought I knew at the time, that my repentance was nothing to my sin.

I have greatly longed of late, for a broken heart, and to lie low before God; and, when I ask for humility, I cannot bear the thoughts of being no more humble than other Christians. It seems to me, that though their degrees of humility may be suitable for them, yet it would be a vile self-exaltation to me, not to be the lowest in humility of all mankind. Others speak of their longing to be "humbled to the dust"; that may be a proper expression for them, but I always think of myself, that I ought, and it is an expression that has long been natural for me to use in prayer, "to lie infinitely low before God." And it is affecting to think, how ignorant I was, when a young Christian, of the bottomless, infinite depths of wickedness, pride, hypocrisy and deceit, left in my heart.

I have a much greater sense of my universal, exceeding dependence on God's grace and strength, and mere good pleasure, of late, than I used formerly to have; and have experienced more of an abhorrence of my own righteousness. The very thought of any joy arising in me, on any consideration of my own amiableness, performances, or experiences, or any goodness of heart or life, is nauseous and detestable to me. And yet I am greatly afflicted with a proud and self-righteous spirit, much more sensibly than I used to be formerly. I see that serpent rising and putting forth its head continually, every where, all around me.

Though it seems to me, that, in some respects, I was a far better Christian, for two or three years after my first conversion, than I am now; and lived in a more constant delight and pleasure;

yet, of late years, I have had a more full and constant sense of the absolute sovereignty of God, and a delight in that sovereignty, and have had more of a sense of the glory of Christ, as a Mediator revealed in the gospel. On one Saturday night, in particular, I had such a discovery of the excellency of the gospel above all other doctrines, that I could not but say to myself, "This is my chosen light, my chosen doctrine", and of Christ, "This is my chosen Prophet." It appeared sweet, beyond all expression, to follow Christ, and to be taught, and enlightened, and instructed by him; to learn of him, and live to him. Another Saturday night, (*January, 1730*) I had such a sense, how sweet and blessed a thing it was to walk in the way of duty; to do that which was right and meet to be done, and agreeable to the holy mind of God; that it caused me to break forth into a kind of loud weeping, which held me some time, so that I was forced to shut myself up, and fasten the doors. I could not but, as it were, cry out, "How happy are they which do that which is right in the sight of God! They are blessed indeed, they are the happy ones!" I had, at the same time, a very affecting sense, how meet and suitable it was that God should govern the world, and order all things according to his own pleasure; and I rejoiced in it, that God reigned, and that his will was done.

[Sarah Pierrepont]
(1723; 1829)

They say there is a young lady in [New Haven] who is beloved of that Great Being, who made and rules the world, and that there are certain seasons in which this Great Being, in some way or other invisible, comes to her and fills her mind with exceeding sweet delight, and that she hardly cares for anything, except to meditate on him—that she expects after a while to be received up where he is, to be raised up out of the world and caught up into heaven; being assured that he loves her too well to let her remain at a distance from him always. There she is to dwell with him, and to be ravished with his love and delight forever. Therefore, if you present all the world before her, with the richest of its treasures, she disregards it and cares not for it, and is unmindful of any pain or affliction. She has a strange sweetness in her mind, and singular purity in her affections; is most just and conscientious in all her conduct; and you could not persuade her to do

any thing wrong or sinful, if you would give her all the world, lest she should offend this Great Being. She is of a wonderful sweetness, calmness and universal benevolence of mind, especially after this Great God has manifested himself to her mind. She will sometimes go about from place to place, singing sweetly; and seems to be always full of joy and pleasure; and no one knows for what. She loves to be alone, walking in the fields and groves, and seems to have some one invisible always conversing with her.

[A Four-Year-Old Convert]

from NARRATIVE OF SURPRISING
CONVERSIONS (1737)

--- I now proceed to the other instance that I would give an account of, which is of the little child forementioned. Her name is Phebe Bartlet, daughter of William Bartlet. I shall give the account as I took it from the mouths of her parents, whose veracity, none that knows them doubt of.

She was born in March, in the year 1731. About the latter end of April, or beginning of May, 1735, she was greatly affected by the talk of her brother, who had been hopefully converted a little before, at about eleven years of age, and then seriously talked to her about the great things of religion. Her parents did not know of it at that time, and were not wont, in the counsels they gave to their children, particularly to direct themselves to her, by reason of her being so young, and, as they supposed her not capable of understanding; but after her brother had talked to her, they observed her very earnestly to listen to the advice they gave to the other children, and she was observed very constantly to retire, several times in a day, as was concluded, for secret prayer, and grew more and more engaged in religion, and was more frequent in her closet, till at last she was wont to visit it five or six times in a day, and was so engaged in it, that nothing would, at any time divert her from her stated closet exercises. Her mother often observed and watched her, when such things occurred, as she thought most likely to divert her, either by putting it out of her thoughts, or otherwise engaging her inclinations, but never could observe her to fail. She mentioned some very remarkable instances.

She once, of her own accord, spake of her unsuccessfulness, in that she could not find God, or to that purpose. But on Thursday, the last of July, about the middle of the day, the child being

in the closet, where it used to retire, its mother heard it speaking aloud, which was unusual, and never had been observed before; and her voice seemed to be as of one exceeding importunate and engaged, but her mother could distinctly hear only these words, (spoken in her childish manner, but seemed to be spoken with extraordinary earnestness, and out of distress of soul) Pray BLESSED LORD, give me salvation! I PRAY, BEG, pardon all my sins! When the child had done prayer, she came out of the closet, and came and sat down by her mother, and cried out aloud. Her mother very earnestly asked her several times, what the matter was, before she would make any answer, but she continued exceedingly crying, and wreathing her body to and fro, like one in anguish of spirit. Her mother then asked her whether she was afraid that God would not give her salvation. She then answered yes, I am afraid I shall go to hell! Her mother then endeavored to quiet her, and told her she would not have her cry . . . she must be a good girl, and pray every day, and she hoped God would give her salvation. But this did not quiet her at all . . . but she continued thus earnestly crying and taking on for some time, till at length she suddenly ceased crying and began to smile, and presently said with a smiling countenance . . . Mother, the kingdom of heaven is come to me! Her mother was surprised at the sudden alteration, and at the speech, and knew not what to make of it, but at first said nothing to her. The child presently spake again, and said, there is another come to me, and there is another . . . there is three; and being asked what she meant, she answered . . . One is, thy will be done, and there is another . . . enjoy him forever; by which it seems that when the child said there is three come to me, she meant three passages of its catechism that came to her mind.

After the child had said this, she retired again into her closet; and her mother went over to her brother's, who was next neighbor; and when she came back, the child being come out of the closet, meets her mother with this cheerful speech . . . I can find God now! Referring to what she had before complained of, that she could not find God. Then the child spoke again, and said . . . I love God! Her mother asked her how well she loved God, whether she loved God better than her father and mother, she said, yes. Then she asked her whether she loved God better than her little

sister Rachel, she answered yes, better than any thing! Then her eldest sister, referring to her saying she could find God now, asked her where she could find God; she answered, in heaven: 5 Why, said she, have you been in heaven? No, said the child. By this it seems not to have been any imagination of any thing seen with bodily eyes that she called God, when she said I can find God now. Her mother asked her whether she was 10 afraid of going to hell, and that had made her cry. She answered, yes, I was, but now I shall not. Her mother asked her whether she thought that God had given her salvation; she answered yes. Her mother asked her, when; she answered, to 15 day. She appeared all that afternoon exceeding cheerful and joyful. One of the neighbors asked her how she felt herself? She answered, I feel better than I did. The neighbor asked her what made her feel better; she answered, God makes 20 me. That evening as she lay a bed, she called one of her little cousins to her, that was present in the room, as having something to say to him; and when he came, she told him that heaven was better than earth. The next day being Friday, her 25 mother asking her her catechism, asked her what God made her for; she answered, to serve him; and added, every body should serve God, and get an interest in Christ.

The same day the elder children, when they came home from school, seemed much affected with the extraordinary change that seemed to be made in Phebe; and her sister Abigail standing by, her mother took occasion to counsel her, now to improve her time, to prepare for another 30 world; on which Phebe burst out in tears, and cried out, poor Nabby! Her mother told her, she would not have her cry, she hoped that God would give Nabby salvation; but that did not quiet her, but she continued earnestly crying for 35 some time; and when she had in a measure ceased, her sister Eunice being by her, she burst out again, and cried, poor Eunice! and cried exceedingly; and when she had almost done, she went into another room, and there looked upon 40 her sister Naomi, and burst out again, crying poor Amy! Her mother was greatly affected at such behavior in the child, and knew not what to say to her. One of the neighbors coming in a little after, asked her what she had cried for. She 45 seemed at first backward to tell the reason: Her mother told her she might tell that person, for he had given her an apple; upon which she said,

she cried because she was afraid they would go to hell.

At night a certain minister, that was occasionally in the town, was at the house, and talked considerably with her of the things of religion; and after he was gone, she sat leaning on the table, with tears running out of her eyes; and being asked what made her cry, she said it was thinking about God. The next day being Saturday, she seemed great part of the day to be in a very affectionate frame, had four turns of crying, and seemed to endeavor to curb herself, and hide her tears, and was very backward to talk of the occasion of it. On the sabbath day she was asked whether she believed in God; she answered yes: And being told that Christ was the Son of God, she made ready answer, and said, I know it.

From this time there has appeared a very remarkable abiding change in the child: She has been very strict upon the Sabbath, and seems to long for the sabbath day before it comes, and will often in the week time be inquiring how long it is to the sabbath day, and must have the days particularly counted over that are between, before she will be contented. And she seems to love God's house . . . is very eager to go thither. Her mother once asked her why she had such a mind to go? Whether it was not to see the fine folks? She said no, it was to hear Mr. Edwards preach. When she is in the place of worship, she is very far from spending her time there as children at her age usually do, but appears with an attention that is very extraordinary for such a child. She also appears, very desirous at all opportunities, to go to private religious meetings, and is very still and attentive at home, in prayer time, and has appeared affected in time of family prayer. She seems to delight much in hearing religious conversation. When I once was there with some others that were strangers, and talked to her something of religion, she seemed more than ordinarily attentive; and when we were gone, she looked out very wistly after us, and said . . . I wish they would come again! Her mother asked her why: Said she, I love to hear them talk!

She seems to have very much of the fear of God before her eyes, and an extraordinary dread of sin against him; of which her mother mentioned the following remarkable instance. Some time in August, the last year, she went with some bigger children, to get some plumbs [*sic*], in a neighbor's lot, knowing nothing of any harm in what she

did; but when she brought some of the plumbs into the house, her mother mildly reproved her, and told her, that she must not get plumbs without leave, because it was sin: God had commanded her not to steal. The child seemed greatly surprised, and burst out into tears, and cried out . . . I will not have these plumbs! And turning to her sister Eunice, very earnestly said to her . . . why did you ask me to go to that plumb tree? I should not have gone if you had not asked me. The other children did not seem to be much affected or concerned; but there was no pacifying Phebe. Her mother told her she might go and ask leave, and then it would not be sin for her to eat them, and sent one of the children to that end; and when she returned, her mother told her that the owner had given leave, now she might eat them, and it would not be stealing. This stilled her a little while, but presently she broke out again into an exceeding fit of crying. Her mother asked her what made her cry again? Why she cried now, since they had asked leave? What it was that troubled her now? And asked her several times very earnestly, before she made any answer; but at last, said it was because . . . BECAUSE IT WAS SIN. She continued a considerable time crying; and said she would not go again if Eunice asked her an hundred times; and she retained her aversion to that fruit for a considerable time, under the remembrance of her former sin.

She, at some times, appears greatly affected and delighted with texts of scripture that come to her mind. Particularly, about the beginning of November, the last year, that text came to her mind, Rev. iii.20. *Behold I stand at the door and knock: If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in, and sup with him and he with me.* She spoke of it to those of the family, with a great appearance of joy, a smiling countenance, and elevation of voice, and afterwards she went into another room, where her mother overheard her talking very earnestly to the children about it, and particularly heard her say to them, three or four times over, with an air of exceeding joy and admiration . . . Why it is to SUP WITH GOD. At some time about the middle of winter, very late in the night, when all were in bed, her mother perceived that she was awake, and heard her as though she was weeping. She called to her, and asked her what was the matter. She answered with a low voice, so that her mother could not hear

what she said; but thinking it might be occasioned by some spiritual affection, said no more to her; but perceived her to lie awake, and to continue in the same frame for a considerable time. The next morning she asked her whether she did not cry the last night: The child answered yes, I did cry a little, for I was thinking about God and Christ, and they loved me. Her mother asked her, whether to think of God and Christ's loving her made her cry: She answered yes, it does sometimes.

She has often manifested a great concern for the good of other souls; and has been wont, many times, affectionately to counsel the other children. Once about the latter end of September, the last year, when she and some others of the children were in a room by themselves a husking Indian corn, the child, after a while, came out and sat by the fire. Her mother took notice that she appeared with a more than ordinary serious and pensive countenance, but at last she broke silence, and said, I have been talking to Nabby and Eunice. Her mother asked her what she had said to them. Why, said she, I told them they must pray, and prepare to die, that they had but a little while to live in this world, and they must be always ready. When Nabby came out, her mother asked her whether she had said that to them. Yes, said she, she said that and a great deal more. At other times the child took her opportunities to talk to the other children about the great concern of their souls; sometimes so as much to affect them, and set them into tears. She was once exceeding importunate with her mother to go with her sister Naomi to pray: Her mother endeavored to put her off, but she pulled her by the sleeve, and seemed as if she would by no means be denied. At last her mother told her, that Amy must go and pray herself; but, says the child, she will not go, and persisted earnestly to beg of her mother to go with her.

She has discovered an uncommon degree of a spirit of charity, particularly on the following occasion: A poor man that lives in the woods, had lately lost a cow that the family much depended on, and being at the house, he was relating his misfortune, and telling of the straits and difficulties they were reduced to by it. She took much notice of it, and it wrought exceedingly on her compassions; and after she had attentively heard him a while, she went away to her father, who was in the shop, and intreated him to give that

man a cow; and told him that the poor man had no cow! That the hunters or something else had killed his cow! And intreated him to give him one of theirs. Her father told her that they could not spare one. Then she intreated him to let him and his family come and live at his house; and had much talk of the same nature, whereby she manifested bowels of compassion to the poor.

She has manifested great love to her minister; particularly when I returned from my long journey for my health, the last fall, when she heard of it, she appeared very joyful at the news, and told the children of it with an elevated voice, as the most joyful tidings, repeating it over and over, Mr. Edwards is come home! Mr. Edwards is come home! She still continues very constant in secret prayer, so far as can be observed, (for she seems to have no desire that others should observe her when she retires, but seems to be a child of a reserved temper) and every night before she goes to bed will say her catechism, and will by no means miss of it: She never forgot it but once, and then after she was a bed, thought of it and cried out in tears . . . I have not said my catechism! And would not be quieted till her mother asked her the catechism as she lay in bed. She sometimes appears to be in doubt about the condition of her soul, and when asked whether she thinks that she is prepared for death, speaks something doubtfully about it: At other times seems to have no doubt, but when asked, replies yes, without hesitation.---

from THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL
(1754)

CONCLUSION

As it has been demonstrated that the futurity of all future events is established by previous necessity, either natural or moral; so it is manifest that the Sovereign Creator and Disposer of the world has ordered this necessity by ordering his own conduct, either in designedly acting or forbearing to act. For, as the being of the world is from God, so the circumstances in which it had its being at first, both negative and positive, must be ordered by him in one of these ways; and all the necessary consequences of these circumstances must be ordered by him. And God's active and positive interpositions, after the world was created, and the consequences of these interposi-

tions; also every instance of his forbearing to interpose, and the sure consequences of this forbearance, must all be determined according to his pleasure. And therefore every event, which is the consequence of any thing whatsoever, or that is connected with any foregoing thing or circumstance, either positive or negative, as the ground or reason of its existence, must be ordered of God; either by a designed efficiency and interposition, or a designed forbearing to operate or interpose. But, as has been proved, all events whatsoever are necessarily connected with something

5 foregoing, either positive or negative, which is the ground of their existence. It follows, therefore, that the whole series of events is thus connected with something in the state of things, either positive or negative, which is original in the series; i.e., something which is connected with nothing preceding that, but God's own immediate conduct, either his acting or forbearing to act. From 10 whence it follows, that as God designedly orders his own conduct, and its connected consequences, it must necessarily be that he designedly orders all things.

JOHN WOOLMAN

1720 - 1772

I find more wisdom in these pages than in any other book written since the days of the Apostles. There is a true philosophy—a clear insight—a right estimate of things.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON (written in the back of a copy of Woolman's *Journal* given him by Whittier.)

Woolman was a New Jersey Quaker preacher who made his living by various occupations: tailor, shopkeeper, schoolmaster, etc. In his *Journal*, which was first published in 1774, he tells of journeys to the South and to England, where he died. The *Journal* gives one an excellent picture of what might be called a practical mystic. Charles Lamb told an American visitor, N. P. Willis, that Woolman's *Journal* was the only American book he ever read twice. Among the various editions of it, we may mention those of John Greenleaf Whittier (1871) and A. M. Gummere (1922). The selection given here is from the third chapter.

[Religion and Business] from THE JOURNAL (1774)

Until this year, 1756, I continued to retail Goods, besides following my Trade as a Taylor; about which Time, I grew uneasy on Account of my Business growing too cumbersome: I had

5 begun with selling Trimmings for Garments, and from thence proceeded to sell Cloths and Linens; and, at length, having got a considerable Shop of Goods, my Trade increased every Year, and the Road to large Business appeared open; but I felt a Stop in my Mind.

Through the Mercies of the Almighty, I had, in a good degree, learned to be content with a

plain Way of Living: I had but a small Family; and, on serious Consideration, I believed Truth did not require me to engage in much cumbering Affairs. It had been my general Practice to buy and sell Things really useful: Things that served chiefly to please the vain Mind in People, I was not easy to trade in; seldom did it; and, whenever I did, I found it weaken me as a *Christian*.

The Increase of Business became my Burthen; for, though my natural Inclination was toward Merchandize, yet I believed Truth required me to live more free from outward Cumbers. and there was now a Strife in my Mind between the two; and in this Exercise my Prayers were put up to the Lord, who graciously heard me, and gave me a Heart resigned to his holy Will: Then I lessened my outward Business; and, as I had Opportunity, told my Customers of my Intention, that they might consider what Shop to turn to: And, in a while, wholly laid down Merchandize, following my Trade as a Taylor, myself only, having no Apprentice. I also had a Nursery of Appletrees; in which I employed some of my Time in hoeing, grafting, trimming, and inoculating. In Merchandize it is the Custom, where I lived, to sell chiefly on Credit, and poor People often get in Debt; and when Payment is expected, not having wherewith to pay, their Creditors often sue for it at Law. Having often observed Occurrences of this Kind, I found it good for me to advise poor People to take such Goods as were most useful and not costly.

In the Time of Trading, I had an Opportunity of seeing, that the too liberal Use of spirituous Liquors, and the Custom of wearing too costly Apparel, led some People into great inconveniences; and these two Things appear to be often connected; for, by not attending to that Use of Things which is consistent with universal Righteousness, there is an Increase of Labour which extends beyond what our heavenly Father intends for us: And by great Labour, and often by much Sweating, there is, even among such as are not Drunkards, a craving of some Liquors to revive the Spirits; that, partly by the luxurious Drinking of some, and partly by the Drinking of others (led to it through immoderate Labour), very great Quantities of Rum are every Year expended in our Colonies; the greater Part of which we should have no Need of, did we steadily attend to pure Wisdom.

Where Men take Pleasure in feeling their Minds elevated with Strong-drink, and so indulge their Appetite as to disorder their Understandings, neglect their Duty as Members in a Family or Civil Society, and cast off all Regard to Religion, their Case is much to be pitied; and where such, whose Lives are for the most Part regular, and whose Examples have a strong Influence on the Minds of others, adhere to some Customs which powerfully draw to the Use of more Strong-liquor than pure Wisdom allows; this also, as it hinders the spreading of the Spirit of Meekness, and strengthens the Hands of the more excessive Drinkers, is a Case to be lamented.

As every Degree of Luxury hath some Connection with Evil, those who profess to be Disciples of Christ, and are looked upon as Leaders of the People, should have that Mind in them which was also in Christ, and so stand separate from every wrong Way, as a Means of Help to the Weaker. As I have sometimes been much spent in the Heat, and taken Spirits to revive me, I have found, by Experience, that in such Circumstances the Mind is not so calm, nor so fitly disposed for divine Meditation, as when all such Extremes are avoided; and I have felt an increasing Care to attend to that holy Spirit which sets Bounds to our Desires, and leads those, who faithfully follow it, to apply all the Gifts of divine Providence to the Purposes for which they were intended. Did such, as have the Care of great Estates, attend with Singleness of Heart to this heavenly Instructor, which so opens and enlarges the Mind, that Men love their Neighbours as themselves, they would have Wisdom given them to manage, without finding Occasion to employ some People in the Luxuries of Life, or to make it necessary for others to labour too hard; but, for want of steadily regarding this Principle of divine Love, a selfish Spirit takes Place in the Minds of People, which is attended with Darkness and manifold Confusion in the World.

Though trading in Things useful is an honest Employ; yet, through the great Number of Superfluities which are bought and sold, and through the Corruption of the Times, they, who apply to merchandize for a Living, have great Need to be well experienced in that Precept which the Prophet JEREMIAH laid down for his Scribe: "Seekest thou great Things for thyself? seek them not." ---

II

*THE
REVOLUTIONARY
PERIOD*

1765 - 1789

THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD

1765-1789

In the upper center appears the stagecoach, chief reliance of eighteenth-century travelers. Madam Sarah Kemble Knight is looking out of the window. In the lower left-hand corner Thomas Paine is writing *Common Sense* on a drumhead; behind him are Abigail Adams and Patrick Henry. Above them sits Franklin with *Poor Richard's Almanac* in his hand. Just above Franklin stands Jefferson, holding in his hand the Declaration of Independence. At the table behind Jefferson are John Adams, Alexander Hamilton, and James Monroe. Above them stands George Washington. Under the figure of Hamilton are the Connecticut Wits, Joel Barlow and Timothy Dwight; in the lower left-hand corner, the men of Valley Forge.

At the bottom in the center Crèvecoeur is shown writing *Letters from an American Farmer*, and Samuel Adams and Paul Revere are arousing the patriots. The figures in the lower right-hand corner represent the Boston Tea Party and the Battle of Bunker Hill.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD

1765 - 1789

These are the times that try men's souls.

—THOMAS PAINE, *The Crisis* (1776).

I

The effect of the Revolution upon American literature was both good and bad. A great war supplies excellent materials for the historical novelist of later times, but it is not favorable to the immediate production of great literature. The Revolutionary War diverted Philip Freneau and the Connecticut Wits from literature to propaganda and satire. Our Colonial culture, which had reached its highest point by 1765, was set back for at least a generation by the war. Schools and colleges found it impossible to function with regularity, and as a result many young men had their education interrupted, and there was no GI Bill of Rights which would have enabled them to complete it. The destruction of property was great. The greatest loss perhaps was in the departure of Loyalists, many of whom belonged to families of wealth and culture. Large numbers went to England and to Canada. In this instance our loss was Canada's gain, for the beginnings of Canadian literature go back to American Tories.

The traditional American view of the Revolution is too simple to be accurate. We have forgotten that it was in effect a civil war and as such one of the most bitter of all wars. John Adams estimated that about one-third of the people were opposed to the Revolution in all its stages. Perhaps another third were comparatively indifferent. Until Kenneth Roberts in 1940 published *Oliver Wiswell*, we had forgotten how badly many of the Tories were treated. In the traditional view the Tories were villains, following the lead of those arch-villains, George III, Lord North, and Benedict Arnold. On the other hand, some of our latter-day journalistic historians have carried their debunking of the Revolutionary leaders to such an extreme that, before Pearl Harbor, some Americans were wondering if our country were worth fighting for.

Today it is easier than it has been to study sympathetically the British case against the colonies, for the two nations have grown closer together since 1914 and there are those who regret that they were ever separated. In the eighteenth century the British ministry desired

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a closer articulation of the various parts of the Empire, which is easily understandable, but it chose untactful methods to bring about the desired result. The effort to make the colonies an integral part of the Empire revealed the fact that the colonists had already grown into something other than typical Englishmen. Having to a large extent governed themselves for many years, they had no desire for stricter control from overseas.

There were Americans, however, who desired a closer union with Great Britain. In 1754 Benjamin Franklin submitted a plan (rejected by the Colonial legislative bodies) for bringing the colonies together under a Governor-General appointed by the King and a Grand Council made up of representatives appointed by the General Assembly of each colony. In 1789 Franklin observed that if his Albany Plan had been adopted, "the subsequent separation of the Colonies from the Mother Country might not so soon have happened." In December, 1754, Franklin, visiting Governor Shirley in Boston, was shown an English plan of unification which provided for a council of the Colonial governors and a tax to be levied on the colonies by an act of Parliament. He wrote to Shirley: "I apprehend, that excluding the *people* of the colonies from all share in the choice of the grand council will give extreme dissatisfaction, as well as the taxing them by act of Parliament, where they have no representative." When Shirley modified his plan so as to permit the colonies to elect representatives to the House of Commons, Franklin replied that it was his opinion "that such a union would be very acceptable to the colonies, provided they had a reasonable number of representatives allowed them; and that all the old acts of Parliament restraining the trade or cramping the manufactures of the colonies be at the same time repealed, and the British subjects *on this side the water* put, in those respects, on the same footing with those in Great Britain. . . ." He added: "I should hope too, that by such a union the people of Great Britain, and the people of the colonies, would learn to consider themselves, as not belonging to a different community with different interests, but to one community with one interest; which I imagine would contribute to strengthen the whole, and greatly lessen the danger of future separations." Twelve years later Franklin wrote to Lord Kames: "I am fully persuaded with you, that a *Consolidating Union*, by a fair and equal representation of all the parts of this empire in Parliament, is the only firm basis on which its political grandeur and prosperity can be founded." Such a union was not to be, but from the lesson of the American Revolution the British learned the wisdom of permitting their other colonies largely to govern themselves.

England became in the late nineteenth century one of the great democratic nations of the world, but in the eighteenth century it was ruled by a small minority composed chiefly of two classes: the merchants and the great landowners. Their attitude was that the colonies existed primarily for the benefit of the mother country. Colonial commerce was regarded as the property of England; and so there were severe restrictions on trade, on manufacturing, and on the issue of paper money. The British Board of Trade could veto acts passed by the Colonial legislatures. The *Boston Gazette* complained on April 29, 1765; "A colonist cannot make a button, a horseshoe, nor a hobnail, but some sooty ironmonger or respectable button-maker of Britain shall bawl and squall that his honor's worship is most egregiously maltreated, injured, cheated, and robbed by the rascally American republicans." The British Parliament was not then the representative body it has since become. Only about 160,000 of some eight millions could vote in Parliamentary elections,

and there were many rotten boroughs. There was little real difference between Whigs and Tories as regards American policies, nor was King George's attitude essentially different from theirs. American leaders made some attempts to secure the support of British liberals but with little success. Outside Parliament there were a good many Englishmen who were vaguely sympathetic with the American cause, but in that body Edmund Burke was almost the only leader who really understood and sympathized with the American position. (A portion of his famous speech "On Conciliation with America" is given in the Appendix to this volume.)

II

The American Revolution gave birth to a remarkable body of political writing. While these orations, official documents, and pamphlets are on the outer fringes of belles-lettres, they compare favorably with the best of the kind written in the mother country in any period. The Earl of Chatham (the elder William Pitt) said in the House of Lords:

"When your lordships look at the papers transmitted to us from America; when you consider their decency, firmness, and wisdom, you cannot but respect their cause and wish to make it your own. For myself, I must declare and avow, that in all my reading and observation—and it has been my favourite study—I have read Thucydides and have studied and admired the master statesmen of the world—that for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, under such a complication of difficult circumstances, no nation or body of men can stand in preference to the general Congress at Philadelphia."

In the course of controversy and war the very objectives of the combatants change, as notably in the Civil War and the First World War. From a dispute over taxation, the American Revolution became a war for the rights of man. The ideal of political democracy memorably expressed in the Declaration of Independence carried with it the implications of democracy in other spheres, economic, social, cultural, religious, and literary. In combating British restrictions, the colonists first based their liberties on Colonial charters and then appealed to their constitutional rights as Englishmen. Finally, they invoked the doctrine of the natural rights of man. Independence was not the aim of the colonists at the outbreak of the war. After fighting had been going on for months, a recent English immigrant, Thomas Paine, in his *Common Sense* showed Americans that their real goals were independence and republicanism.

The natural rights philosophy to which the Revolutionary leaders appealed goes back to John Milton and other Puritan thinkers who justified the dethronement of Charles I, but it was given a new formulation by John Locke and other writers who defended the expulsion of James II in 1688. Historically, the doctrine is probably wrong, and it has been attacked on other grounds by Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. (See Volume II, p. 534.) The doctrine assumed that originally men lived in a state of nature without any civil authority and that when they combined to form the first government, they kept their natural rights to life, liberty, and property, which were often identified with the laws of God. Government was supposed to rest upon an implied or expressed contract with the King. If he violated the terms of the contract, his subjects were justified in defending their rights by revolution if necessary. The natural rights philosophy is briefly expressed in the

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Declaration of Independence, but it is given in greater detail in the Virginia Bill of Rights, written by George Mason. This document was clearly in Jefferson's mind when he wrote the Declaration. Its influence is also obvious in the national Bill of Rights, which consists of the first ten amendments to the federal Constitution. We give here six of the sixteen paragraphs of the Virginia document:

"A declaration of rights made by the representatives of the good people of Virginia, assembled in full and free convention; which rights do pertain to them and their posterity, as the basis and foundation of government.

"1. That all men are by nature equally free and independent, and have certain inherent rights, of which, when they enter into a state of society, they cannot by any compact deprive or divest their posterity; namely, the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety.

"2. That all power is vested in, and consequently derived from, the people; that magistrates are their trustees and servants, and at all times amenable to them.

"3. That government is, or ought to be instituted for the common benefit, protection, and security of the people, nation, or community; of all the various modes and forms of government, that is best which is capable of producing the greatest degree of happiness and safety, and is most effectually secured against the danger of maladministration; and that when any government shall be found inadequate or contrary to these purposes, a majority of the community hath an indubitable, unalienable and indefeasible right to reform, alter or abolish it, in such manner as shall be judged most conducive to the public weal.

"4. That no man, or set of men, are entitled to exclusive or separate emoluments or privileges from the community, but in consideration of publick services; which, not being descendible, neither ought the offices of magistrate, legislator or judge to be hereditary.

"12. That the freedom of the press is one of the great bulwarks of liberty, and can never be restrained but by despotick governments.

"16. That religion, or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force, or violence; and therefore all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; and that it is the mutual duty of all to practise Christian forbearance, love, and charity towards each other."

One of the great results of the Revolution was the achievement of some semblance of unity among the thirteen colonies. It was extremely difficult to make a nation out of such divergent units or, as John Adams put it, to make thirteen clocks all strike at the same time. In spite of provincialism and suspicion, the leaders of the various colonies managed to work together better than might have been expected from the wide extent of Colonial jealousies suggested by Charles M. Andrews in his *Colonial Folkways* (1919):

"... to the New Englander the well-known hospitality, good breeding, and politeness of the Southerners seemed little more than a sham. . . . Even [Josiah] Quincy himself, no ill-natured critic, could find in Virginia no courteous gentlemen and generous hosts but only 'knaves and sharpers' given to practices that were 'knavish and trickish.' . . .

"Little more exact, on the other hand, was the Southerner's opinion of New Eng-

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land, to him a land of pretended holiness and disagreeable self-righteousness. He . . . charged [the New Englander] with business methods that were little short of thievery."

The Revolution brought a new nation into the world, but few even in this country had any notion of what the extent of its territory, population, and power would be by the middle of the twentieth century. The Revolution also prepared the way for a cultural and literary development not based primarily on that of England. The alliance with France paved the way for the coming of cultural influences other than English.

III

The Revolution plays a considerable part in our later literature. (See Burton E. Stevenson's *Poems of American History* and E. A. Baker's *Guide to Historical Fiction*.) Some of the novels which deal with the Revolution are Fenimore Cooper's *The Spy* and *The Pilot*, John Pendleton Kennedy's *Horse-Shoe Robinson*, William Gilmore Simms's series of Revolutionary romances, John Esten Cooke's *The Virginia Comedians*, Paul Leicester Ford's *Janice Meredith*, S. Weir Mitchell's *Hugh Wynne*, Maurice Thompson's *Alice of Old Vincennes*, and Winston Churchill's *Richard Carvel* and *The Crossing*. Among poems we may mention Bryant's "Song of Marion's Men," Longfellow's "Paul Revere's Ride," Emerson's "Concord Hymn," Lowell's "Under the Old Elm," and Holmes's "Grandmother's Story of Bunker Hill Battle."

There are more titles in English literature dealing with the Revolution than one would suppose. Among the more notable are the dialogue between Washington and Franklin in the *Imaginary Conversations* of Walter Savage Landor, Tennyson's poem, "England and America in 1782," Thackeray's novel, *The Virginians*, and Bernard Shaw's play, *The Devil's Disciple*, a story of Burgoyne's disastrous campaign. We cannot refrain from quoting the following sentence from Shaw's opening description of the setting in Act I: "The year 1777 is the one in which the passions roused by the breaking-off of the American colonies from England, more by their own weight than their own will, boiled up to shooting point, the shooting being idealized to the English mind as suppression of rebellion and maintenance of British dominion, and to the American as defence of liberty, resistance to tyranny, and self-sacrifice on the altar of the Rights of Man."

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

1706 - 1790

These two [Franklin and Emerson] are, I think, the most distinctively and honourably American of your writers; they are the most original and the most valuable.

—MATTHEW ARNOLD, "Emerson" (1883).

Franklin was born in Boston, the tenth son of a tallow chandler. He was, as the *Autobiography* informs us, mainly self-educated. He was apprenticed to his half-brother, James, who founded the *New England Courant*, to which Benjamin contributed some of his earliest writings. These were in the tradition of the *Spectator*, which was widely imitated in the colonies. Although Bostonians, the Franklins had little in common with Cotton Mather, whose *Essays to Do Good* Franklin, however, read with appreciation. At seventeen Franklin, having quarreled with James, ran away to Philadelphia, where he found an environment more congenial than Boston had been. In 1726 he went to London, where he stayed two years. Already he was ceasing to be a provincial and becoming a citizen of the eighteenth-century world.

In Philadelphia his business was that of a printer. By 1748, with an income of something like two thousand pounds a year, Franklin was able to devote most of his time and energies to public services. He had already started *Poor Richard's Almanack* (1732–1757), served as Clerk of the Pennsylvania Assembly (1736–1751), and helped to found the American Philosophical Society in 1743. In 1741 he founded the *General Magazine*, the second oldest (by three days) American magazine. In 1751 he founded the Philadelphia Academy, which became the University of Pennsylvania. His experiments with electricity brought him international fame and honorary degrees from Harvard, Yale, William and Mary, St. Andrews, and Oxford. His inventive genius produced the Franklin stove, bifocal glasses, and various other devices. His *Autobiography* brings the story of his life down to 1757, just the time when his most distinguished public services began.

In that year he went to England as the agent of the Pennsylvania Assembly. In 1762 he returned to Philadelphia but was immediately sent back. Between 1768 and 1770 Georgia, New Jersey, and Massachusetts made him their representative. Convinced that further efforts to prevent war were useless, he sailed for America in March, 1775. He was elected a member of the Continental Congress, which placed him on the committee to draft a declaration of independence. He was in France from 1776 to 1785. The alliance with France

was in large part due to his tireless efforts. He was extremely popular in France, where he was regarded as a product of the simple, natural life. With John Adams and John Jay he signed the Treaty of Paris, by which Great Britain acknowledged the independence of the United States. He was a member of the convention which framed the federal Constitution.

Franklin was one of the greatest men of the eighteenth century and one of the most versatile men who ever lived. His life may profitably be compared with those of two notable contemporaries, Jonathan Edwards and Samuel Johnson. With Franklin, literature was largely incidental; he wrote to promote practical ends. And yet his prose style is one that almost any eighteenth-century writer might have envied; it has ease and charm as well as clearness, force, and flexibility.

There are numerous biographies of Franklin, but the latest and best is that of Carl Van Doren (1938). Carl Becker's biographical sketch in the *D. A. B.* is an admirable short biography. The two best editions of his writings, neither complete, are those edited by John Bigelow in ten volumes (1887-1889) and A. H. Smyth in ten volumes (1905-1907). There is an excellent essay on Franklin by the great French critic Sainte-Beuve, which may be read in Katharine P. Wormeley's translation in his *Portraits of the Eighteenth Century* (1905). The volume of selections from Franklin in the American Writers Series, edited by F. L. Mott and C. E. Jorgenson (1936), contains an excellent introduction and a good working bibliography. Further references may be found in Lewis Leary (ed.), *Articles on American Literature . . .* (1947).

from THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY
(1771, 1784-1789)

Franklin's literary reputation rests mainly upon the *Autobiography*, which is hardly surpassed in its kind by anything ever written. It was composed at different times between 1771 and 1789; and it brings the story of his life down only to 1757. The story of its publication is a complex affair. In 1816 his grandson, Temple Franklin, published a much expurgated, Bowdlerized version. In 1868 John Bigelow published an edition based on a manuscript which he had found in France, and for the first time the *Autobiography* appeared in something like the form in which it had been written.

For some account of the various manuscripts of the *Autobiography*, see Max Farrand, "Benjamin Franklin's Memoirs," *Huntington Library Bulletin*, October, 1936.

[Introductory]

TWYFORD, at the
Bishop of St. Asaph's, 1771.

DEAR SON, I have ever had a Pleasure in obtaining any little Anecdotes of my Ancestors.

You may remember the Enquiries I made among the Remains of my Relations when you were with me in England, and the journey I undertook for that purpose. Now imagining it may be equally agreeable to you to know the Circumstances of my Life, many of which you are yet unacquainted with; and expecting a Weeks uninterrupted Leisure in my present Country Retirement, I sit down to write them for you.

To which I have besides some other Inducements. Having emerg'd from the Poverty and Obscurity in which I was born and bred, to a State of Affluence and some Degree of Reputation in the World, and having gone so far thro' Life with a considerable Share of Felicity, the conducing Means I made use of, which, with the Blessing of God, so well succeeded, my Posterity may like to know, as they may find some of them suitable to their own Situations, and therefore fit to be imitated. That Felicity, when I reflected on it, has induc'd me sometimes to say, that were it offer'd to my Choice, I should have no Objection to a Repetition of the same Life from its Beginning, only asking the Advantages Authors

have in a second Edition to correct some Faults of the first. So would I if I might, besides cor[recting] the Faults, change some sinister Accidents and Events of it for others more favourable, but tho' this were deny'd, I should still accept the Offer. However, since such a Repetition is not to be expected, the next Thing most like living one's Life over again, seems to be a *Recollection* of that Life; and to make that Recollection as durable as possible, the putting it down in Writing. Hereby, too, I shall indulge the Inclination so natural in old Men, to be talking of themselves and their own past Actions, and I shall indulge it, without being troublesome to others who thro' respect to Age might think themselves oblig'd to give me a Hearing, since this may be read or not as any one pleases. And lastly (I may as well confess it, since my Denial of it will be believ'd by no Body) perhaps I shall a good deal gratify my own *Vanity*. Indeed I scarce ever heard or saw the introductory Words, *Without vanity I may say*, &c., but some vain thing immediately follow'd. Most People dislike Vanity in others whatever share they have of it themselves, but I give it fair Quarter wherever I meet with it, being persuaded that it is often productive of Good to the Possessor and to others that are within his Sphere of Action: And therefore in many Cases it would not be quite absurd if a Man were to thank God for his Vanity among the other Comforts of Life.—

And now I speak of thanking God, I desire with all Humility to acknowledge, that I owe the mention'd Happiness of my past Life to his kind Providence, which led me to the Means I us'd and gave them Success. My Belief of this, induces me to *hope*, tho' I must not *presume*, that the same Goodness will still be exercis'd towards me in continuing that Happiness, or in enabling me to bear a fatal Reverse, which I may experience as others have done, the Complexion of my future Fortune being known to him only: in whose Power it is to bless to us even our Afflictions. - - -

[Self-Education]

From a child I was fond of reading, and all the little money that came into my hands was ever laid out in books. Pleased with the *Pilgrim's Progress*, my first collection was of John Bun-

yan's works in separate little volumes. I afterward sold them to enable me to buy R. Burton's *Historical Collections*; they were small chapmen's books, and cheap, forty or fifty in all. My father's little library consisted chiefly of books in polemic divinity, most of which I read, and have since often regretted that, at a time when I had such a thirst for knowledge, more proper books had not fallen in my way, since it was now resolved I should not be a clergyman. Plutarch's *Lives* there was in which I read abundantly, and I still think that time spent to great advantage. There was also a book of De Foe's, called an *Essay on Projects*, and another of Dr Mather's, called *Essays to do Good*, which perhaps gave me a turn of thinking that had an influence on some of the principal future events of my life.

This bookish inclination at length determined my father to make me a printer, though he had already one son (James) of that profession. In 1717 my brother James returned from England with a press and letters to set up his business in Boston. I liked it much better than that of my father, but still had a hankering for the sea. To prevent the apprehended effect of such an inclination, my father was impatient to have me bound to my brother. I stood out some time, but at last was persuaded, and signed the indentures when I was yet but twelve years old. I was to serve as an apprentice till I was twenty-one years of age, only I was to be allowed journeyman's wages during the last year. In a little time I made great proficiency in the business, and became a useful hand to my brother. I now had access to better books. An acquaintance with the apprentices of booksellers enabled me sometimes to borrow a small one, which I was careful to return soon and clean. Often I sat up in my room reading the greatest part of the night, when the book was borrowed in the evening and to be returned early in the morning, lest it should be missed or wanted.

And after some time an ingenious tradesman, Mr. Matthew Adams, who had a pretty collection of books, and who frequented our printing-house, took notice of me, invited me to his library, and very kindly lent me such books as I chose to read. I now took a fancy to poetry, and made some little pieces; my brother, thinking it might turn to account, encouraged me, and put me on composing occasional ballads. One was called *The Lighthouse Tragedy*, and contained

an account of the drowning of Captain Worthlake, with his two daughters: the other was a sailor's song, on the taking of *Teach* (or Blackbeard) the pirate. They were wretched stuff, in the Grub-street-ballad style; and when they were printed he sent me about the town to sell them. The first sold wonderfully, the event being recent, having made a great noise. This flattered my vanity; but my father discouraged me by ridiculing my performances, and telling me verse-makers were generally beggars. So I escaped being a poet, most probably a very bad one, but as prose writing has been of great use to me in the course of my life, and was a principal means of my advancement, I shall tell you how, in such a situation, I acquired what little ability I have in that way.

There was another bookish lad in the town, John Collins by name, with whom I was intimately acquainted. We sometimes disputed, and very fond we were of argument, and very desirous of confuting one another, which disputatious turn, by the way, is apt to become a very bad habit, making people often extremely disagreeable in company by the contradiction that is necessary to bring it into practice; and thence, besides souring and spoiling the conversation, is productive of disgusts and, perhaps, enmities where you may have occasion for friendship. I had caught it by reading my father's books of dispute about religion. Persons of good sense, I have since observed, seldom fall into it, except lawyers, university men, and men of all sorts that have been bred at Edinborough.

A question was once, somehow or other, started between Collins and me, of the propriety of educating the female sex in learning, and their abilities for study. He was of opinion that it was improper, and that they were naturally unequal to it. I took the contrary side, perhaps a little for dispute's sake. He was naturally more eloquent, had a ready plenty of words; and sometimes, as I thought, bore me down more by his fluency than by the strength of his reasons. As we parted without settling the point, and were not to see one another again for some time, I sat down to put my arguments in writing, which I copied fair and sent to him. He answered, and I replied. Three or four letters of a side had passed, when my father happened to find my papers and read them. Without entering into the discussion, he took occasion to talk to me

about the manner of my writing, observed that, though I had the advantage of my antagonist in correct spelling and pointing (which I ow'd to the printing-house), I fell far short in elegance of expression, in method and in perspicuity, of which he convinced me by several instances. I saw the justice of his remarks, and thence grew more attentive to the manner in writing, and determined to endeavor at improvement.

About this time I met with an odd volume of the *Spectator*. It was the third. I had never before seen any of them. I bought it, read it over and over, and was much delighted with it. I thought the writing excellent, and wished, if possible, to imitate it. With this view I took some of the papers, and, making short hints of the sentiment in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, try'd to compleat the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been expressed before, in any suitable words that should come to hand. Then I compared my *Spectator* with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them. But I found I wanted a stock of words, or a readiness in recollecting and using them, which I thought I should have acquired before that time if I had gone on making verses; since the continual occasion for words of the same import, but of different length, to suit the measure, or of different sound for the rhyme, would have laid me under a constant necessity of searching for variety, and also have tended to fix that variety in my mind, and make me master of it. Therefore I took some of the tales and turned them into verse; and, after a time, when I had pretty well forgotten the prose, turned them back again. I also sometimes jumbled my collections of hints into confusion, and after some weeks endeavored to reduce them into the best order, before I began to form the full sentences and compleat the paper. This was to teach me method in the arrangement of thoughts. By comparing my work afterwards with the original, I discovered my faults and amended them; but I sometimes had the pleasure of fancying that, in certain particulars of small import, I had been lucky enough to improve the method or the language, and this encouraged me to think I might possibly in time come to be a tolerable English writer, of which I was extremely ambitious. My time for these exercises and for reading was at night, after

work or before it began in the morning, or on Sundays, when I contrived to be in the printing-house alone, evading as much as I could the common attendance on public worship which my father used to exact of me when I was under his care, and which indeed I still thought a duty, though I could not, as it seemed to me, afford time to practise it.

When about 16 years of age I happened to meet with a book, written by one Tryon, recommending a vegetable diet. I determined to go into it. My brother, being yet unmarried, did not keep house, but boarded himself and his apprentices in another family. My refusing to eat flesh occasioned an inconveniency, and I was frequently chid for my singularity. I made myself acquainted with Tryon's manner of preparing some of his dishes, such as boiling potatoes or rice, making hasty pudding, and a few others, and then proposed to my brother, that if he would give me, weekly, half the money he paid for my board, I would board myself. He instantly agreed to it, and I presently found that I could save half what he paid me. This was an additional fund for buying books. But I had another advantage in it. My brother and the rest going from the printing-house to their meals, I remained there alone, and, despatching presently my light repast, which often was no more than a basket or a slice of bread, a handful of raisins or a tart from the pastry-cook's, and a glass of water, had the rest of the time till their return for study, in which I made the greater progress, from that greater clearness of head and quicker apprehension which usually attend temperance in eating and drinking.

And now it was that, being on some occasion made ashamed of my ignorance in figures, which I had twice failed in learning when at school, I took Cocker's book of *Arithmetick*, and went through the whole by myself with great ease. I also read Seller's and Shermy's books of *Navigation*, and became acquainted with the little geometry they contain; but never proceeded far in that science. And I read about this time Locke *On Human Understanding*, and the *Art of Thinking*, by Messrs. du Port Royal.

While I was intent on improving my language, I met with an English grammar (I think it was Greenwood's), at the end of which there were two little sketches of the arts of rhetoric and logic, the latter finishing with a specimen of a

dispute in the Socratic method; and soon after I procur'd Xenophon's *Memorable Things of Socrates*, wherein there are many instances of the same method. I was charm'd with it, adopted it, dropt my abrupt contradiction and positive argumentation, and put on the humble inquirer and doubter. And being then, from reading Shaftesbury and Collins, become a real doubter in many points of our religious doctrine, I found this method safest for myself and very embarrassing to those against whom I used it, therefore I took a delight in it, practis'd it continually, and grew very artful and expert in drawing people, even of superior knowledge, into concessions, the consequences of which they did not foresee, entangling them in difficulties out of which they could not extricate themselves, and so obtaining victories that neither myself nor my cause always deserved. I continu'd this method some few years, but gradually left it, retaining only the habit of expressing myself in terms of modest diffidence; never using, when I advanced anything that may possibly be disputed, the words *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, or any others that give the air of positiveness to an opinion, but rather say, I conceive or apprehend a thing to be so and so; it appears to me, or *I should think it so or so*, for such and such reasons; or *I imagine it to be so*; or *it is so, if I am not mistaken*. This habit, I believe, has been of great advantage to me when I have had occasion to inculcate my opinions, and persuade men into measures that I have been from time to time engag'd in promoting, and, as the chief ends of conversation are to *inform* or to be *informed*, to *please* or to *persuade*, I wish well-meaning, sensible men would not lessen their power of doing good by a positive, assuming manner, that seldom fails to disgust, tends to create opposition, and to defeat every one of those purposes for which speech was given to us,—to wit, giving or receiving information or pleasure. For, if you would inform, a positive and dogmatical manner in advancing your sentiments may provoke contradiction and prevent a candid attention. If you wish information and improvement from the knowledge of others, and yet at the same time express yourself as firmly fix'd in your present opinions, modest, sensible men, who do not love disputation, will probably leave you undisturbed in the possession of your error. And by such a manner, you can seldom hope to recommend yourself in *pleasing* your hearers, or to

persuade those whose concurrence you desire.
Pope says, judiciously.

"Men should be taught as if you taught them not,
And things unknown propos'd as things forgot;"

farther recommending to us

"To speak, tho' sure, with seeming diffidence."

And he might have coupled with this line
that which he has coupled with another, I think, 10
less properly

"For want of modesty is want of sense."

If you ask, Why less properly? I must repeat the
lines:

"Immodest words admit of no defense,
For want of modesty is want of sense."

Now, is not *want of sense* (where a man is so
unfortunate as to want it) some apology for his
want of modesty? and would not the lines stand
more justly thus?

"Immodest words admit but this defense,
That want of modesty is want of sense"

This, however, I should submit to better judg-
ments.

[Religion and Morality]

Tho' I seldom attended any public worship, I
had still an opinion of its propriety, and of its
utility when rightly conducted, and I regularly
paid my annual subscription for the support of
the only Presbyterian minister or meeting we
had in Philadelphia. He used to visit me some-
times as a friend, and admonish me to attend his
administrations, and I was now and then pre-
vail'd on to do so, once for five Sundays succes-
sively. Had he been in my opinion a good
preacher, perhaps I might have continued, not-
withstanding the occasion I had for the Sunday's
leisure in my course of study; but his discourses
were chiefly either polemic arguments, or ex-
planations of the peculiar doctrines of our sect,
and were all to me very dry, uninteresting, and
unedifying, since not a single moral principle
was inculcated or enforc'd, their aim seeming
to be rather to make us Presbyterians than good
citizens.

At length he took for his text that verse of the
fourth chapter of Philippians: "Finally, brethren,

*whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure,
lovely, or of good report, if there be any virtue,
or any praise, think on these things."* And I

imagin'd, in a sermon on such a text, we could
not miss of having some morality. But he con-
fin'd himself to five points only, as meant by the
apostle, viz. 1. Keeping holy the Sabbath day.
2. Being diligent in reading the holy Scriptures
3. Attending duly the publick worship. 4. Par-
taking of the Sacrament. 5. Paying a due respect
to God's ministers. These might be all good
things; but, as they were not the kind of good
things that I expected from that text, I despaired
of ever meeting with them from any other, was
disgusted, and attended his preaching no more.
I had some years before compos'd a little Liturgy,
or form of prayer, for my own private use (viz,
in 1728), entitled *Articles of Belief and Acts of
Religion*. I return'd to the use of this, and went
no more to the public assemblies. My conduct
might be blameable, but I leave it, without at-
tempting further to excuse it; my present purpose
being to relate facts, and not to make apologies
for them.

It was about this time I conceiv'd the bold
and arduous project of arriving at moral per-
fection. I wish'd to live without committing any
fault at any time; I would conquer all that either
natural inclination, custom, or company might
lead me into. As I knew, or thought I knew, what
was right and wrong, I did not see why I might
not always do the one and avoid the other. But
I soon found I had undertaken a task of more
d'fficulty than I had imagined. While my care
was employ'd in guarding against one fault, I
was often surprised by another; habit took the
advantage of inattention; inclination was some-
times too strong for reason. I concluded, at
length, that the mere speculative conviction
that it was our interest to be completely virtuous,
was not sufficient to prevent our slipping; and
that the contrary habits must be broken, and
good ones acquired and established, before we
can have any dependence on a steady, uniform
rectitude of conduct. For this purpose I there-
fore contrived the following method.

In the various enumerations of the moral
virtues I had met with in my reading, I found
the catalogue more or less numerous, as different
writers included more or fewer ideas under the
same name. Temperance, for example, was by
some confined to eating and drinking, while by

others it was extended to mean the moderating every other pleasure, appetite, inclination, or passion, bodily or mental, even to our avarice and ambition. I propos'd to myself, for the sake of clearness, to use rather more names, with fewer ideas annex'd to each, than a few names with more ideas; and I included under thirteen names of virtues all that at that time occur'd to me as necessary or desirable, and annexed to each a short precept, which fully express'd the extent I gave to its meaning

These names of virtues, with their precepts, were:

1. TEMPERANCE

Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.

2. SILENCE

Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself, avoid trifling conversation.

3. ORDER

Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.

4. RESOLUTION

Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.

5. FRUGALITY

Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; *i.e.*, waste nothing.

6. INDUSTRY

Lose no time; be always employ'd in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.

7. SINCERITY

Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly; and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

8. JUSTICE

Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

9. MODERATION

Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.

10. CLEANLINESS

Tolerate no uncleanness in body, cloaths, or habitation.

11. TRANQUILLITY

Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable

12. CHASTITY

Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.

13. HUMILITY

Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

My intention being to acquire the *habitude* of all these virtues, I judg'd it would be well not to distract my attention by attempting the whole at once, but to fix it on one of them at a time; and, when I should be master of that, then to proceed to another, and so on, till I should have gone thro' the thirteen, and, as the previous acquisition of some might facilitate the acquisition of certain others, I arrang'd them with that view, as they stand above. Temperance first, as it tends to procure that coolness and clearness of head, which is so necessary where constant vigilance was to be kept up, and guard maintained against the unremitting attraction of ancient habits, and the force of perpetual temptations. This being acquir'd and establish'd, Silence would be more easy; and my desire being to gain knowledge at the same time that I improv'd in virtue, and considering that in conversation it was obtain'd rather by the use of the ears than of the tongue, and therefore wishing to break a habit I was getting into of prattling, punning, and joking, which only made me acceptable to trifling company, I gave *Silence* the second place. This and the next, *Order*, I expected would allow me more time for attending to my project and my studies. *Resolution*, once become habitual, would keep me firm in my endeavors to obtain all the subsequent virtues; *Frugality* and *Industry* freeing me from my remaining debt, and producing affluence and independence, would make more easy the practice of *Sincerity* and *Justice*, etc., etc. Conceiving then, that, agreeably to the advice of Pythagoras in his Golden Verses, daily examination would be necessary, I contrived the following method for conducting that examination.

I made a little book¹ in which I allotted a

¹ This "little book" is dated July 1, 1733.

page for each of the virtues. I rul'd each page with red ink, so as to have seven columns, one for each day of the week, marking each column with a letter for the day. I cross'd these columns with thirteen red lines, marking the beginning of each line with the first letter of one of the virtues, on which line, and in its proper column, I might mark, by a little black spot, every fault I found upon examination to have been committed respecting that virtue upon that day.

Form of the pages.

TEMPERANCE.							
EAT NOT TO DULLNESS, DRINK NOT TO ELEVATION.							
	S.	M.	T.	W.	T.	F.	S.
T.							
S.	*	*		*		†	
O.	**	*	*		*	*	*
R.			*			*	
F.		*			*		
I.			*				
S.							
J.							
M.							
C.							
T.							
C.							
H.							

I determined to give a week's strict attention to each of the virtues successively. Thus, in the first week, my great guard was to avoid every the least offence against *Temperance*, leaving the other virtues to their ordinary chance, only marking every evening the faults of the day. Thus, if in the first week I could keep my first line, marked T, clear of spots, I suppos'd the habit of that virtue so much strengthen'd, and its opposite weaken'd, that I might venture extending my attention to include the next, and for the following week keep both lines clear of spots. Proceeding thus to the last, I could go thro'

a course compleat in thirteen weeks, and four courses in a year. And like him who, having a garden to weed, does not attempt to eradicate all the bad herbs at once, which would exceed his reach and his strength, but works on one of the beds at a time, and, having accomplish'd the first, proceeds to a second, so I should have, I hoped, the encouraging pleasure of seeing on my pages the progress I made in virtue, by clearing successively my lines of their spots, till in the end, by a number of courses, I should be happy in viewing a clean book, after a thirteen weeks' daily examination.

This my little book had for its motto these lines from Addison's *Cato*:

*"Here will I hold. If there's a power above us
(And that there is, all nature cries aloud
Thro' all her works), He must delight in virtue;
And that which He delights in must be happy."*

Another from Cicero,

*"O vitæ Philosophia dux! O virtutum indagatrix
expultrixque vitiorum! Unus dies, bene et ex præceptis tuis actus, peccanti immortalitati est antependendus."*²

Another from the Proverbs of Solomon, speaking of wisdom or virtue:

"Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."—iii. 16, 17.

And conceiving God to be the fountain of wisdom, I thought it right and necessary to solicit his assistance for obtaining it; to this end I formed the following little prayer, which was prefix'd to my tables of examination, for daily use.

"O powerful Goodness! bountiful Father! merciful Guide! Increase in me that wisdom which discovers my truest interest. Strengthen my resolutions to perform what that wisdom dictates. Accept my kind offices to thy other children as the only return in my power for thy continual favours to me."

I used also sometimes a little prayer which I took from Thomson's Poems, viz:

*"Father of light and life, thou Good Supreme!
O teach me what is good; teach me Thyself!"*

²*"O Philosophy, the guide of life! O inducer of virtues and expeller of vices! One day spent well on account of your precepts is preferable to a sinful immortality."*

*Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low pursuit; and fill my soul
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure;
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss"*

The precept of *Order* requiring that *every part of my business should have its allotted time*, one page in my little book contain'd the following scheme of employment for the twenty-four hours of a natural day.

THE MORNING.	{	5	Rise, wash, and ad-
		6	dress <i>Powerful Good-</i>
			<i>ness!</i> Contrive day's
		7	business, and take the
Question. What good shall I do this day?	{		resolution of the day;
			prosecute the present
			study, and breakfast.
		8	
	{	9	
		10	Work.
		11	
		12	
NOON.	{	1	Read, or overlook
		2	my accounts, and dine.
		3	
		4	Work.
	{	5	
		6	Put things in their
		7	places. Supper. Music
		8	or diversion, or con-
Question. What good have I done to-day?	{		versation. Examination
			of the day.
		9	
		10	
	{	11	
		12	
		1	Sleep.
		2	
NIGHT.	{	3	
		4	

I enter'd upon the execution of this plan for self-examination, and continu'd it with occasional intermissions for some time. I was surpris'd to find myself so much fuller of faults than I had imagined; but I had the satisfaction of seeing them diminish. To avoid the trouble of renewing now and then my little book, which, by scraping out the marks on the paper of old faults to make room for new ones in a new course, became full of holes, I transferr'd my tables and precepts to the ivory leaves of a memorandum book, on which the lines were drawn with red ink, that made a durable stain, and on those lines I mark'd my faults with a black-lead pencil, which marks I could easily wipe out with a wet sponge. After a while I went thro' one course only

in a year, and afterward only one in several years, till at length I omitted them entirely, being employ'd in voyages and business abroad, with a multiplicity of affairs that interfered; but I always carried my little book with me.

My scheme of *ORDER* gave me the most trouble; and I found that, tho' it might be practicable where a man's business was such as to leave him the disposition of his time, that of a journeyman printer, for instance, it was not possible to be exactly observed by a master, who must mix with the world, and often receive people of business at their own hours. *Order*, too, with regard to places for things, papers, etc., I found extremely difficult to acquire. I had not been early accustomed to it, and having an exceeding good memory, I was not so sensible of the inconvenience attending want of method. This article, therefore, cost me so much painful attention, and my faults in it vexed me so much, and I made so little progress in amendment, and had such frequent relapses, that I was almost ready to give up the attempt, and content myself with a faulty character in that respect, like the man who, in buying an ax of a smith, my neighbour, desired to have the whole of its surface as bright as the edge. The smith consented to grind it bright for him if he would turn the wheel; he turn'd, while the smith press'd the broad face of the ax hard and heavily on the stone, which made the turning of it very fatiguing. The man came every now and then from the wheel to see how the work went on, and at length would take his ax as it was without farther grinding. "No," said the smith, "turn on, turn on; we shall have it bright by-and-by; as yet, it is only speckled." "Yes," says the man, "*but I think I like a speckled ax best.*" And I believe this may have been the case with many, who, having, for want of some such means as I employ'd, found the difficulty of obtaining good and breaking bad habits in other points of vice and virtue, have given up the struggle, and concluded that "*a speckled ax was best*"; for something, that pretended to be reason, was every now and then suggesting to me that such extream nicety as I exacted of myself might be a kind of foppery in morals, which, if it were known, would make me ridiculous; that a perfect character might be attended with the inconvenience of being envied and hated; and that a benevolent man should allow a few faults in himself, to keep his friends in countenance.

In truth, I found myself incorrigible with respect to Order, and now I am grown old, and my memory bad, I feel very sensibly the want of it. But, on the whole, tho' I never arrived at the perfection I had been so ambitious of obtaining, but fell far short of it, yet I was, by the endeavour, a better and a happier man than I otherwise should have been if I had not attempted it; as those who aim at perfect writing by imitating the engraved copies, tho' they never reach the wish'd-for excellence of those copies, their hand is mended by the endeavor, and is tolerable while it continues fair and legible.

It may be well my posterity should be informed that to this little artifice, with the blessing of God, their ancestor ow'd the constant felicity of his life, down to his 79th year, in which this is written. What reverses may attend the remainder is in the hand of Providence; but, if they arrive, the reflection on past happiness enjoy'd ought to help his bearing them with more resignation. To Temperance he ascribes his long-continued health, and what is still left to him of a good constitution; to Industry and Frugality, the early easiness of his circumstances and acquisition of his fortune, with all that knowledge that enabled him to be a useful citizen, and obtained for him some degree of reputation among the learned; to Sincerity and Justice, the confidence of his country, and the honorable employs it conferred upon him; and to the joint influence of the whole mass of the virtues, even in the imperfect state he was able to acquire them, all that evenness of temper, and that cheerfulness in conversation, which makes his company still sought for and agreeable even to his younger acquaintance. I hope, therefore, that some of my descendants may follow the example and reap the benefit. - - -

LETTERS

TO WILLIAM STRAHAN

This letter, addressed to a London printer, was never sent.

PHILADELPHIA, July 5, 1775.

MR. STRAHAN,

You are a Member of Parliament, and one of that Majority which has doomed my Country to Destruction.—You have begun to burn our

Towns, and murder our People.—Look upon your Hands! They are stained with the Blood of your Relations!—You and I were long Friends:—You are now my Enemy,—and I am

Yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO SIR JOSEPH BANKS

PASSY, July 27, 1783.

DEAR SIR:

I received your very kind letter by Dr. Blagden, and esteem myself much honoured by your friendly Remembrance. I have been too much and too closely engaged in public Affairs, since his being here, to enjoy all the Benefit of his Conversation you were so good as to intend me. I hope soon to have more Leisure, and to spend a part of it in those Studies, that are much more agreeable to me than political Operations.

I join with you most cordially in rejoicing at the return of Peace. I hope it will be lasting, and that Mankind will at length, as they call themselves reasonable Creatures, have Reason and Sense enough to settle their Differences without cutting Throats; for, in my opinion, *there never was a good War, or a bad Peace.* What vast additions to the Conveniences and Comforts of Living might Mankind have acquired, if the Money spent in Wars had been employed in Works of public utility! What an extension of Agriculture, even to the Tops of our Mountains; what Rivers rendered navigable, or joined by Canals: what Bridges, Aqueducts, new Roads, and other public Works, Edifices, and Improvements, rendering England a compleat Paradise, might have been obtained by spending those Millions in doing good, which in the last War have been spent in doing Mischief; in bringing Misery into thousands of Families, and destroying the Lives of so many thousands of working people, who might have performed the useful labour!

I am pleased with the late astronomical Discoveries made by our Society. Furnished as all Europe now is with Academies of Science, with nice Instruments and the Spirit of Experiment, the progress of human knowledge will be rapid, and discoveries made, of which we have at present no Conception. I begin to be almost sorry I was born so soon, since I cannot have the happi-

ness of knowing what will be known 100 years hence.

I wish continued success to the Labours of the Royal Society, and that you may long adorn their Chair; being, with the highest esteem, dear Sir, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P.S. Dr. Blagden will acquaint you with the experiment of a vast Globe sent up into the Air, much talked of here, and which, if prosecuted, may furnish means of new knowledge.

TO EZRA STILES

Ezra Stiles was President of Yale College and a grandson of Edward Taylor, the Puritan poet.

PHILADELPHIA, *March 9, 1790.*

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR:

I received your kind letter of January 28, and am glad you have at length received the portrait of Governor Yale from his family, and deposited it in the College Library. He was a great and good man, and had the merit of doing infinite service to your country by his munificence to that institution. The honour you propose doing me by placing mine in the same room with his, is much too great for my deserts; but you always had a partiality for me, and to that it must be ascribed. I am, however, too much obliged to Yale College, the first learned society that took notice of me and adorned me with its honors, to refuse a request that comes from it thro' so esteemed a friend. But I do not think any one of the portraits you mention, as in my possession, worthy of the place and company you propose to place it in. You have an excellent artist lately arrived. If he will undertake to make one for you, I shall cheerfully pay the expence, but he must not delay setting about it, or I may slip thro' his fingers, for I am now in my eighty-fifth year, and very infirm. ---

You desire to know something of my religion. It is the first time I have been questioned upon it. But I cannot take your curiosity amiss, and shall endeavor in a few words to gratify it. Here is my creed.

I believe in one God, creator of the universe. That he governs it by his Providence. That he ought to be worshipped. That the most acceptable service we render to him is doing good to his other children. That the soul of man is immortal, and will be treated with justice in an-

other life respecting its conduct in this. These I take to be the fundamental principles of all sound religion, and I regard them as you do in whatever sect I meet with them.

As to Jesus of Nazareth, my opinion of whom you particularly desire, I think the system of morals, and his religion, as he left them to us, the best the world ever saw or is likely to see but I apprehend it has received various corrupting changes, and I have, with most of the present dissenters in England, some doubts as to his divinity; tho' it is a question I do not dogmatize upon, having never studied it, and think it needless to busy myself with it now, when I expect soon an opportunity of knowing the truth with less trouble. I see no harm, however, in its being believed, if that belief has the good consequence, as it probably has, of making his doctrines more respected and better observed; especially as I do not perceive that the Supreme takes it amiss, by distinguishing the unbelievers in his government of the world with any peculiar marks of his displeasure.

I shall only add, respecting myself, that, having experienced the goodness of that being in conducting me prosperously thro' a long life, I have no doubt of its continuance in the next, though without the smallest conceit of meriting such goodness. My sentiments on this head you will see in the copy of an old letter enclosed, which I wrote in answer to one from a zealous religionist, whom I had relieved in a paralytic case by electricity, and who, being afraid I should grow proud upon it, sent me his serious though rather impertinent caution. I send you also the copy of another letter, which will shew something of my disposition relating to religion. With great and sincere esteem and affection, I am,

Your obliged old friend and most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Had not your college some present of books from the King of France? Please to let me know, if you had an expectation given you of more, and the nature of that expectation. I have a reason for the enquiry.

I confide that you will not expose me to criticism and censure by publishing any part of this communication to you. I have ever let others enjoy their religious sentiments, without reflecting on them for those that appeared to me unsupportable and even absurd. All sects here, and

we have a great variety, have experienced my good will in assisting them with subscriptions for building their new places of worship and as I have never opposed any of their doctrines, I hope to go out of the world in peace with them all.

THE WAY TO WEALTH

(1757)

In his Preface to *Poor Richard Improved* for 1758 Franklin grouped together, in the speech of Father Abraham at an auction, many of the best proverbs which had appeared in his earlier almanacs for a quarter of a century. Apart from the *Autobiography*, "The Way to Wealth" is the best-known work of its author. It has been assumed that it also contains the essence of Franklin's wisdom. There are, however, aspects of his philosophy which could hardly be represented here. The folk wisdom which inspires most proverbs is based largely upon prudence. In the earlier almanacs Franklin had included such proverbs—hardly suited to the speaker in "The Way to Wealth"—as: "He does not possess wealth, it possesses him"; "Avarice and happiness never saw each other How then should they become acquainted?" and "Wealth is not his that has it, but his that enjoys it." A few of Poor Richard's proverbial sayings seem to be original with Franklin. Among these are "An empty bag cannot stand upright" and "Experience keeps a dear school, yet fools will learn in no other." The great majority of the proverbs, however, were borrowed from folk sayings and from authors of many lands. These he often improved. The English proverb, "A muffled cat is no good mouser," became in Franklin's version, "The cat in gloves catches no mice." For an illuminating discussion of the Poor Richard proverbs, see Carl Van Doren, *Benjamin Franklin* (1938), pp. 106 ff.

COURTEOUS READER

I have heard that nothing gives an Author so great Pleasure, as to find his Works respectfully quoted by other learned Authors. This Pleasure I have seldom enjoyed; for tho' I have been, if I may say it without Vanity, an *eminent Author* of Almanacks annually now a full Quarter of a Century, my Brother Authors in the same Way, for what Reason I know not, have ever been very sparing in their Applauses, and no other Author has taken the least Notice of me, so that did not my Writings produce me some solid *Pudding*, the great Deficiency of *Praise* would have quite discouraged me.

I concluded at length, that the People were

the best Judges of my merit; for they buy my Works; and besides, in my Rambles, where I am not personally known, I have frequently heard one or other of my Adages repeated, with, as *Poor Richard* says, at the End on 't; this gave me some Satisfaction, as it showed not only that my Instructions were regarded, but discovered likewise some Respect for my Authority; and I own, that to encourage the Practice of remembering and repeating those wise Sentences, I have sometimes *quoted myself* with great Gravity.

Judge, then how much I must have been gratified by an Incident I am going to relate to you. I stopt my Horse lately where a great Number of People were collected at a Vendue of Merchant Goods. The Hour of Sale not being come, they were conversing on the Badness of the Times and one of the Company call'd to a plain clean old Man, with white Locks, "Pray, Father Abraham, what think you of the Times? Won't these heavy Taxes quite ruin the Country? How shall we be ever able to pay them? What would you advise us to?" Father *Abraham* stood up, and reply'd, "If you'd have my Advice, I'll give it you in short, for *A Word to the Wise is enough*, and *many Words won't fill a Bushel*, as *Poor Richard* says." They join'd in desiring him to speak his Mind, and gathering round him, he proceeded as follows;

"Friends," says he, "and Neighbours, the Taxes are indeed very heavy, and if those laid on by the Government were the only Ones we had to pay, we might more easily discharge them; but we have many others, and much more grievous to some of us. We are taxed twice as much by our *Idleness*, three times as much by our *Pride*, and four times as much by our *Folly*; and from these Taxes the Commissioners cannot ease or deliver us by allowing an Abatement. However let us hearken to good Advice, and something may be done for us: *God helps them that help themselves*, as *Poor Richard* says, in his Almanack of 1733.

It would be thought a hard Government that should tax its People one-tenth Part of their *Time*, to be employed in its Service. But *Idleness* taxes many of us much more, if we reckon all that is spent in absolute *Sloth*, or doing of nothing, with that which is spent in idle Employments or Amusements, that amount to nothing. *Sloth*, by bringing on Diseases, absolutely shortens Life. *Sloth, like Rust, consumes faster than Labour wears; while the used Key is always bright*, as

Poor Richard says. *But dost thou love Life, then do not squander Time; for that's the stuff Life is made of*, as *Poor Richard* says. How much more than is necessary do we spend in sleep, forgetting that *The Sleeping Fox catches no Poultry*, and that *There will be sleeping enough in the Grave*, as *Poor Richard* says.

If *Time be of all Things the most precious*, *wasting Time must be*, as *Poor Richard* says, *the greatest Prodigality*; since, as he elsewhere tells us, *Lost Time is never found again*; and *what we call Time enough, always proves little enough*: Let us then up and be doing, and doing to the Purpose, so by Diligence shall we do more with less Perplexity. *Sloth makes all Things difficult, but Industry all easy*, as *Poor Richard* says; and *He that riseth late must trot all Day, and shall scarce overtake his Business at Night*; while *Laziness travels so slowly, that Poverty soon overtakes him*, as we read in *Poor Richard*, who adds, *Drive thy Business, let not that drive thee, and Early to Bed, and early to rise, makes a Man healthy, wealthy, and wise*.

So what signifies *wishing* and *hoping* for better Times? We may make these Times better, if we bestir ourselves. *Industry need not wish*, as *Poor Richard* says, *and he that lives upon Hope will die fasting. There are no Gains without Pains; then Help Hands, for I have no Lands, or if I have, they are smartly taxed*. And, as *Poor Richard* likewise observes, *He that hath a Trade hath an Estate; and he that hath a Calling, hath an Office of Profit and Honour*; but then the Trade must be worked at, and the Calling well followed, or neither the Estate nor the Office will enable us to pay our Taxes. If we are industrious, we shall never starve: for, as *Poor Richard* says, *At the working Man's House Hunger looks in, but dares not enter*. Nor will the Bailiff or the Constable enter, for *Industry pays Debts, while Despair encreaseth them*, says *Poor Richard*. What though you have found no Treasure, nor has any rich Relation left you a Legacy, *Diligence is the Mother of Goodluck* as *Poor Richard* says and *God gives all Things to Industry. Then plough deep, while Sluggards sleep, and you shall have Corn to sell and to keep*, says *Poor Dick*. Work while it is called To-day, for you know not how much you may be hindered To-morrow, which makes *Poor Richard* say, *One to-day is worth two To-morrows*, and farther, *Have you somewhat to do To-morrow, do it To-day*. If you were a Ser-

vant, would you not be ashamed that a good Master should catch you idle? Are you then your own Master, *be ashamed to catch yourself idle*, as *Poor Dick* says. When there is so much to be done for yourself, your Family, your Country, and your gracious King, be up by Peep of Day; *Let not the Sun look down and say, Inglorious here he lies*. Handle your tools without Mittens; remember that *The Cat in Gloves catches no Mice*, as *Poor Richard* says. 'Tis true there is much to be done, and perhaps you are weak-handed, but stick to it steadily; and you will see great Effects, for *Constant Dropping wears away Stones*, and by *Diligence and Patience the Mouse ate in two the Cable*; and *Little Strokes fell great Oaks*, as *Poor Richard* says in his Almanack, the Year I cannot just now remember.

Methinks I hear some of you say, *Must a Man afford himself no Leisure?* I will tell thee, my friend, what *Poor Richard* says, *Employ thy Time well, if thou meanest to gain Leisure; and, since thou art not sure of a Minute, throw not away an Hour*. Leisure, is Time for doing something useful; this Leisure the diligent Man will obtain, but the Lazy Man never; so that, as *Poor Richard* says, *A Life of Leisure and a Life of Laziness are two Things*. Do you imagine that Sloth will afford you more Comfort than Labour? No, for as *Poor Richard* says, *Trouble springs from Idleness, and grievous Toil from needless Ease. Many without Labour, would live by their Wits only, but they break for want of Stock*. Whereas Industry gives Comfort, and Plenty, and Respect: *Fly Pleasures, and they'll follow you. The diligent Spinner has a large Shift; and now I have a Sheep and a Cow, everybody bids me good Morrow; all which is well said by Poor Richard*.

But with our Industry, we must likewise be steady, settled, and careful, and oversee our own Affairs with our own Eyes, and not trust too much to others; for, as *Poor Richard* says

*I never saw an oft-removed Tree,
Nor yet an oft-removed Family,
That throve so well as those that settled be.*

And again, *Three Removes is as bad as a Fire*; and again, *Keep thy Shop, and thy Shop will keep thee*; and again, *If you would have your Business done, go; if not, send*. And again,

*He that by the Plough would thrive,
Himself must either hold or drive.*

And again, *The Eye of a Master will do more Work than both his Hands*; and again, *Want of Care does us more Damage than Want of Knowledge*; and again, *Not to oversee Workmen, is to leave them your Purse open*. Trusting too much to others' Care is the Ruin of many; for, as the Almanack says, *In the Affairs of this World, Men are saved, not by Faith, but by the Want of it*; but a Man's own Care is profitable; for, saith Poor Dick, *Learning is to the Studious, and Riches to the Careful*, as well as *Power to the Bold, and Heaven to the Virtuous*. And farther, *If you would have a faithful Servant, and one that you like, serve yourself*. And again, he adviseth to Circumspection and Care, even in the smallest Matters, because sometimes *A little Neglect may breed great Mischief*; adding, *for want of a Nail the Shoe was lost; for want of a Shoe the Horse was lost; and for want of a Horse the Rider was lost, being overtaken and slain by the Enemy*; all for want of Care about a Horse-shoe Nail.

So much for Industry, my Friends, and Attention to one's own Business; but to these we must add Frugality, if we would make our Industry more certainly successful. A Man may, if he knows not how to save as he gets, *keep his Nose all his Life to the Grindstone*, and die not worth a Groat at last. *A fat Kitchen makes a lean Will*, as Poor Richard says; and

*Many Estates are spent in the Getting,
Since Women for Tea forsook Spinning and Knitting,
And Men for Punch forsook Hewing and Splitting.*

If you would be wealthy, says he, in another Almanack, *think of Saving as well as of Getting*; *The Indies have not made Spain rich, because her Outgoes are greater than her Incomes*.

Away then with your expensive Follies, and you will not then have so much Cause to complain of hard Times, heavy Taxes, and chargeable Families; for, as Poor Dick says,

*Women and Wine, Game and Deceit,
Make the Wealth small and the Wants great.*

And farther, *What maintains one Vice, would bring up two Children*. You may think perhaps, that a little Tea, or a little Punch now and then, Diet a little more costly, Clothes a little finer, and a little Entertainment now and then, can be no great Matter; but remember what Poor Richard says, *Many a Little makes a Mickle*; and farther, *Beware of little Expences; A small Leak will sink a great Ship*; and again, *Who Dainties love,*

shall Beggars prove; and moreover, Fools make Feasts, and wise Men eat them.

Here you are all got together at this Vendue of Fineries and Knicknacks. You call them Goods, but if you do not take Care, they will prove Evils to some of you. You expect they will be sold cheap, and perhaps they may for less than they cost; but if you have no Occasion for them, they must be dear to you. Remember what Poor Richard says, *Buy what thou hast no Need of, and ere long thou shalt sell thy Necessaries*. And again, *At a great Pennyworth pause a while*: He means, that perhaps the Cheapness is apparent only, and not Real, or the bargain, by straitening thee in thy Business, may do thee more Harm than Good. For in another Place he says, *Many have been ruined by buying good Pennyworths*. Again, Poor Richard says, *'tis foolish to lay out Money in a Purchase of Repentance*; and yet this Folly is practised every Day at Vendues, for want of minding the Almanack. *Wise Men*, as Poor Dick says, *learn by others' Harms, Fools scarcely by their own*; but *felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum*.³ Many a one, for a Sake of Finery on the Back, have gone with a hungry Belly, and half-starved their Families. *Silks and Sattins, Scarlet and Velvets*, as Poor Richard says, *put out the Kitchen Fire*.

These are not the Necessaries of Life; they can scarcely be called the Conveniences; and yet only because they look pretty, how many want to have them! The artificial Wants of Mankind thus become more numerous than the Natural; and, as Poor Dick says, *for one poor Person, there are an hundred indigent*. By these, and other Extravagancies, the Genteel are reduced to poverty, and forced to borrow of those whom they formerly despised, but who through Industry and Frugality have maintained their Standing; in which Case it appears plainly, that *A Ploughman on his Legs is higher than a Gentleman on his Knees*, as Poor Richard says. Perhaps they have had a small Estate left them, which they knew not the Getting of; they think, *'tis Day, and will never be Night*; that a little to be spent out of so much, is not worth minding; *a Child and a Fool*, as Poor Richard says, *imagine Twenty shillings and Twenty Years can never be spent but, always taking out of the Meal-tub, and never putting in, soon comes to the Bottom*; as Poor Dick says, *When the Well's dry, they know the Worth of*

³"Happy is he whom the dangers that befall others make cautious."

Water. But this they might have known before, if they had taken his Advice, *If you would know the Value of Money, go and try to borrow some; for, he that goes a borrowing goes a sorrowing;* and indeed so does he that lends to such People, when he goes to *get it in again.* Poor Dick farther advises, and says,

*Fond Pride of Dress is sure a very Curse;
E'er Fancy you consult, consult your Purse.*

And again, *Pride is as loud a Beggar as Want, and a great deal more saucy* When you have bought one fine Thing, you must buy ten more, that your Appearance may be all of a Piece; but Poor Dick says, *'Tis easier to suppress the first Desire, than to satisfy all that follow it.* And 'tis as truly Folly for the Poor to ape the Rich, as for the Frog to swell, in order to equal the ox.

*Great Estates may venture more,
But little Boats should keep near Shore.*

'Tis, however, a Folly soon punished; for *Pride that dines on Vanity, sups on Contempt,* as Poor Richard says. And in another Place, *Pride breakfasted with Plenty, dined with Poverty, and supped with Infamy.* And after all, of what Use is this *Pride of Appearance,* for which so much is risked, so much is suffered? It cannot promote Health, or ease Pain; it makes no Increase of Merit in the Person, it creates Envy, it hastens Misfortune.

*What is a Butterfly? At best
He's but a Caterpillar drest.
The gaudy Fop's his Picture just,*

as Poor Richard says.

But what Madness must it be to *run in Debt* for these Superfluities! We are offered, by the Terms of this Vendue, *Six Months' Credit;* and that perhaps has induced some of us to attend it, because we cannot spare the ready Money, and hope now to be fine without it. But, ah, think what you do when you run in Debt; *you give to another Power over your Liberty.* If you cannot pay at the Time, you will be ashamed to see your Creditor; you will be in Fear when you speak to him; you will make poor pitiful sneaking Excuses, and by Degrees come to lose your Veracity, and sink into base downright lying; for, as Poor Richard says, *The second Vice is Lying, the first is running in Debt.* And again, to the same Purpose, *Lying rides upon Debt's Back.* Whereas a freeborn Englishman ought not to be ashamed or afraid to see or speak to any Man

living. But Poverty often deprives a Man of all Spirit and Virtue. *'Tis hard for an empty Bag to stand upright,* as Poor Richard truly says.

What would you think of that Prince, or that Government, who should issue an Edict forbidding you to dress like a Gentleman or a Gentlewoman, on Pain of Imprisonment or Servitude? Would you not say, that you were free, have a Right to dress as you please, and that such an Edict would be a Breach of your Privileges, and such a Government tyrannical? And yet you are about to put yourself under that Tyranny, when you run in Debt for such Dress! Your Creditor has Authority, at his Pleasure to deprive you of your Liberty, by confining you in Gaol for Life, or to sell you for a Servant, if you should not be able to pay him! When you have got your Bargain, you may, perhaps, think little of Payment; but Creditors, Poor Richard tells us, *have better Memories than Debtors;* and in another Place says, *Creditors are a superstitious Sect, great Observers of set Days and Times.* The Day comes round before you are aware, and the Demand is made before you are prepared to satisfy it, Or if you bear your Debt in Mind, the Term which at first seemed so long, will, as it lessens, appear extremely short. *Time* will seem to have added Wings to his Heels as well as Shoulders. *Those have a short Lent,* saith Poor Richard, *who owe Money to be paid at Easter.* Then since, as he says, *The Borrower is a Slave to the Lender, and the Debtor to the Creditor,* disdain the Chain, preserve your Freedom; and maintain your Independency: Be *Industrious* and *free;* be *frugal* and *free.* At present, perhaps, you may think yourself in thriving Circumstances, and that you can bear a little Extravagance without Injury; but,

*For Age and Want, save while you may;
No Morning Sun lasts a whole Day,*

as Poor Richard says. Gain may be temporary and uncertain, but ever while you live, Expence is constant and certain; and *'tis easier to build two Chimnies, than to keep one in Fuel,* as Poor Richard says. So, *Rather go to Bed supperless than rise in Debt.*

*Get what you can, and what you get hold;
'Tis the Stone that will turn all your lead into Gold,*

as Poor Richard says. And when you have got the Philosopher's Stone, sure you will no longer complain of bad Times, or the Difficulty of paying Taxes.

This Doctrine, my Friends, is *Reason* and *Wisdom*, but after all, do not depend too much upon your own *Industry*, and *Frugality*, and *Prudence*, though excellent Things, for they may all be blasted without the Blessing of Heaven; and therefore, ask that Blessing humbly, and be not uncharitable to those that at present seem to want it, but comfort and help them. Remember, *Job* suffered, and was afterwards prosperous

And now to conclude, *Experience keeps a dear School, but Fools will learn in no other, and scarce in that*; for it is true, *we may give Advice, but we cannot give Conduct*, as *Poor Richard* says: However, remember this, *They that won't be counselled, can't be helped*, as *Poor Richard* says. and farther, That, *if you will not hear Reason, she'll surely rap your Knuckles.*"

Thus the old Gentleman ended his Harangue. The People heard it, and approved the Doctrine, and immediately practised the contrary, just as if it had been a common Sermon; for the Vendue opened, and they began to buy extravagantly, notwithstanding his Cautions and their own Fear of Taxes. I found the good Man had thoroughly studied my Almanacks, and digested all I had dropt on these Topicks during the Course of Five and twenty Years The frequent Mention he made of me must have tired any one else, but my Vanity was wonderfully delighted with it, though I was conscious that not a tenth Part of the Wisdom was my own, which he ascribed to me, but rather the *Gleanings* I had made of the Sense of All Ages and Nations. However, I resolved to be the better for the Echo of it; and though I had at first determined to buy Stuff for a new Coat, I went away resolved to wear my old One a little longer. *Reader*, if thou wilt do the same, thy Profit will be as great as mine. *I am, as ever, thine to serve thee,*

RICHARD SAUNDERS.

July, 1757.

**RULES BY WHICH A GREAT EMPIRE
MAY BE REDUCED TO A SMALL ONE;
PRESENTED TO A LATE MINISTER,
WHEN HE ENTERED UPON HIS
ADMINISTRATION**

(1773)

This is one of the best examples of Revolutionary propaganda. The method employed is irony, effectively used by Swift and other eighteenth-century English satirists.

An ancient Sage boasted, that, tho' he could not fiddle, he knew how to make a *great city* of a *little one*. The science that I, a modern simpleton, am about to communicate, is the very reverse

I address myself to all ministers who have the management of extensive dominions, which from their very greatness are become troublesome to govern, because the multiplicity of their affairs leaves no time for *fiddling*.

I. In the first place, gentlemen, you are to consider, that a great empire, like a great cake, is most easily diminished at the edges Turn your attention, therefore, first to your *remotest* provinces; that, as you get rid of them, the next may follow in order.

II. That the possibility of this separation may always exist, take special care the provinces are never incorporated with the mother country; that they do not enjoy the same common rights, the same privileges in commerce; and that they are governed by *severer* laws, all of *your enacting*, without allowing them any share in the choice of the legislators. By carefully making and preserving such distinctions, you will (to keep to my simile of the cake) act like a wise ginger-bread-baker who, to facilitate a division, cuts his dough half through in those places where, when baked, he would have it *broken to pieces*.

III. Those remote provinces have perhaps been acquired, purchased, or conquered, at the *sole expence* of the settlers, or their ancestors, without the aid of the mother country. If this should happen to increase her *strength*, by their growing numbers, ready to join in her wars, her *commerce*, by their growing demand for her manufactures; or her *naval power*, by greater employment for her ships and seamen, they may probably suppose some merit in this, and that it entitles them to some favour; you are therefore to *forget it all, or resent it*, as if they had done you injury. If they happen to be zealous whigs, friends of liberty, nurtured in revolution principles, *remember all that* to their prejudice, and resolve to punish it; for such principles, after a revolution is thoroughly established, are of *no more use*; they are even *odious* and *abominable*.

IV. However peaceably your colonies have submitted to your government, shewn their affection to your interests, and patiently borne their grievances, you are to *suppose* them always inclined to revolt, and treat them accordingly.

Quarter troops among them, who by their insolence may *provoke* the rising of mobs, and by their bullets and bayonets *suppress* them. By this means, like the husband who uses his wife ill from *suspicion*, you may in time convert your *suspicions* into *realities*.

V. Remote provinces must have *Governors* and *Judges*, to represent the Royal Person, and execute everywhere the delegated parts of his office and authority. You ministers know, that much of the strength of government depends on the *opinion* of the people, and much of that opinion on the *choice of rulers* placed immediately over them. If you send them wise and good men for governors, who study the interest of the colonists, and advance their prosperity, they will think their King wise and good, and that he wishes the welfare of his subjects. If you send them learned and upright men for Judges, they will think him a lover of justice. This may attach your provinces more to his government. You are therefore to be careful whom you recommend for those offices. If you can find prodigals, who have ruined their fortunes, broken gamblers or stock-jobbers, these may do well as *governors*; for they will probably be rapacious, and provoke the people by their extortions. Wrangling proctors and pettifogging lawyers, too, are not amiss, for they will be for ever disputing and quarrelling with their little parliaments. If withal they should be ignorant, wrong-headed, and insolent, so much the better. Attornies' clerks and Newgate solicitors will do for *Chief Justices*, especially if they hold their places *during your pleasure*; and all will contribute to impress those ideas of your government, that are proper for a people you would *wish to renounce it*.

VI. To confirm these impressions, and strike them deeper, whenever the injured come to the capital with complaints of maladministration, oppression, or injustice, punish such suitors with long delay, enormous expence, and a final judgment in favour of the oppressor. This will have an admirable effect every way. The trouble of future complaints will be prevented, and Governors and Judges will be encouraged to farther acts of oppression and injustice; and thence the people may become more disaffected, and at length desperate.

VII. When such Governors have crammed their coffers, and made themselves so odious to the people that they can no longer remain among

them, with safety to their persons, *recall and reward* them with pensions. You may make them *baronets* too, if that respectable order should not think fit to resent it. All will contribute to encourage new governors in the same practice, and make the supreme government, *detestable*.

VIII. If, when you are engaged in war, your colonies should vie in liberal aids of men and money against the common enemy, upon your simple requisition, and give far beyond their abilities, reflect that a penny taken from them by your power is more honourable to you, than a pound presented by their benevolence, despise therefore their voluntary grants, and resolve to harass them with novel taxes. They will probably complain to your parliaments, that they are taxed by a body in which they have no representative, and that this is contrary to common right. They will petition for redress. Let the Parliaments flout their claims, reject their petitions, refuse even to suffer the reading of them, and treat the petitioners with the utmost contempt. Nothing can have a better effect in producing the alienation proposed; for though many can forgive injuries, *none ever forgave contempt*.

IX. In laying these taxes, never regard the heavy burthens those remote people already undergo, in defending their own frontiers, supporting their own provincial governments, making new roads, building bridges, churches, and other public edifices, which in old countries have been done to your hands by your ancestors, but which occasion constant calls and demands on the purses of a new people. Forget the *restraints* you lay on their trade for *your own* benefit, and the advantage a *monopoly* of this trade gives your exacting merchants. Think nothing of the wealth those merchants and your manufacturers acquire by the colony commerce; their increased ability thereby to pass taxes at home; their accumulating, in the price of their commodities, most of those taxes, and so levying them from their consuming customers; all this, and the employment and support of thousands of your poor by the colonists, you are *entirely to forget*. But remember to make your arbitrary tax more grievous to your provinces, by public declarations importing that your power of taxing them has *no limits*; so that when you take from them without their consent one shilling in the pound, you have a clear right to the other nineteen. This will probably weaken every idea of *security in their property*,

and convince them, that under such a government they *have nothing they can call their own*; which can scarce fail of producing the *happiest consequences!*

X. Possibly, indeed, some of them might still comfort themselves, and say, "Though we have no property, we have yet *something* left that is valuable; we have constitutional *liberty*, both of person and of conscience. This King, these Lords, and these Commons, who it seems are too remote from us to know us, and feel for us, cannot take from us our *Habeas Corpus* right, or our right of trial by a jury of our neighbours; they cannot deprive us of the exercise of our religion, alter our ecclesiastical constitution, and compel us to be Papists, if they please, or Mahometans." To annihilate this comfort, begin by laws to perplex their commerce with infinite regulations, impossible to be remembered and observed; ordain seizures of their property for every failure, take away the trial of such property by Jury, and give it to arbitrary Judges of your own appointing, and of the lowest characters in the country, whose salaries and emoluments are to arise out of the duties or condemnations, and whose appointments are *during pleasure*. Then let there be a formal declaration of both Houses, that opposition to your edicts is *treason*, and that any person suspected of treason in the provinces may, according to some obsolete law, be seized and sent to the metropolis of the empire for trial; and pass an act, that those there charged with certain other offences, shall be sent away in chains from their friends and country to be tried in the same manner for felony. Then erect a new Court of Inquisition among them, accompanied by an armed force, with instructions to transport all such suspected persons; to be ruined by the expence, if they bring over evidences to prove their innocence, or be found guilty and hanged, if they cannot afford it. And, lest the people should think you cannot possibly go any farther, pass another solemn declaratory act, "that King, Lords, Commons had, hath, and of right ought to have, full power and authority to make statutes of sufficient force and validity to bind the unrepresented provinces IN ALL CASES WHATSOEVER." This will include *spiritual* with temporal, and, taken together, must operate wonderfully to your purpose; by convincing them, that they are at present under a power something like that spoken of in the scriptures, which can not only *kill their bodies*, but *damn their souls* to

all eternity, by compelling them, if it pleases, *to worship the Devil*.

XI. To make your taxes more odious, and more likely to procure resistance, send from the capital a board of officers to superintend the collection, composed of the most *indiscreet, ill-bred, and insolent* you can find. Let these have large salaries out of the extorted revenue, and live in open, grating luxury upon the sweat and blood of the industrious; whom they are to worry continually with groundless and expensive prosecutions before the above mentioned arbitrary revenue Judges; *all at the cost of the party prosecuted*, tho' acquitted, because *the King is to pay no costs*. Let these men, *by your order*, be exempted from all the common taxes and burthens of the province, though they and their property are protected by its laws. If any revenue officers are *suspected* of the least tenderness for the people, discard them. If others are justly complained of, protect and reward them. If any of the under officers behave so as to provoke the people to drub them, promote those to better offices this will encourage others to procure for themselves such profitable drubbings, by multiplying and enlarging such provocations, and *all will work towards the end you aim at*.

XII. Another way to make your tax odious, is to misapply the produce of it. If it was originally appropriated for the *defence* of the provinces, the better support of government, and the administration of justice, where it may be *necessary*, then apply none of it to that *defence*, but bestow it where it is *not necessary*, in augmented salaries or pensions to every governor, who has distinguished himself by his enmity to the people, and by calumniating them to their sovereign. This will make them pay it more unwillingly, and be more apt to quarrel with those that collect it and those that imposed it, who will quarrel again with them, and all shall contribute to your *main purpose*, of making them *weary of your government*.

XIII. If the people of any province have been accustomed to support their own Governors and Judges to satisfaction, you are to apprehend that such Governors and Judges may be thereby influenced to treat the people kindly, and to do them justice. This is another reason for applying part of that revenue in larger salaries to such Governors and Judges, given, as their commissions are, *during your pleasure* only; forbidding them to take any salaries from their provinces; that

thus the people may no longer hope any kindness from their Governors, or (in Crown cases) any justice from their Judges. And, as the money thus misapplied in one province is extorted from all, probably *all will resent the misapplication.*

XIV. If the parliaments of your provinces should dare to claim rights, or complain of your administration, order them to be harassed with *repeated dissolutions*. If the same men are continually returned by new elections, adjourn their meetings to some country village, where they cannot be accommodated, and there keep them *during pleasure*; for this, you know, is your **PREROGATIVE**, and an excellent one it is, as you may manage it to promote discontents among the people, diminish their respect, and *increase their disaffection.*

XV. Convert the brave, honest officers of your navy into pimping tide-waiters and colony officers of the *customs*. Let those, who in time of war fought gallantly in defence of the commerce of their countrymen, in peace be taught to prey upon it. Let them learn to be corrupted by great and real smugglers; but (to shew their diligence) scour with armed boats every bay, harbour, river, creek, cove, or nook throughout the coast of your colonies; stop and detain every coaster, every wood-boat, every fisherman, tumble their cargoes and even their ballast inside out and upside down; and, if a penn'orth of pins is found unentered, let the whole be seized and confiscated. Thus shall the trade of your colonists suffer more from their friends in time of peace, than it did from their enemies in war. Then let these boats' crews land upon every farm in their way, rob the orchards, steal the pigs and the poultry, and insult the inhabitants. If the injured and exasperated farmers, unable to procure other justice, should attack the aggressors, drub them, and burn their boats; you are to call this *high treason and rebellion*, order fleets and armies into their country, and threaten to carry all the offenders three thousand miles to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. *O! this will work admirably!*

XVI. If you are told of discontents in your colonies, never believe that they are general, or that you have given occasion for them; therefore do not think of applying any remedy, or of changing any offensive measure. Redress no grievance, lest they should be encouraged to demand the redress of some other grievance. Grant no request that is just and reasonable, lest they should make

another that is unreasonable. Take all your informations of the state of the colonies from your Governors and officers in enmity with them. Encourage and reward these *leasing-makers*; secrete their lying accusations, lest they should be confuted; but act upon them as the clearest evidence; and believe nothing you hear from the friends of the people: suppose all *their* complaints to be invented and promoted by a few factious demagogues, whom if you could catch and hang, all would be quiet. Catch and hang a few of them accordingly; and the *blood of the Martyrs* shall *work miracles* in favour of your purpose.

XVII. If you see *rival nations* rejoicing at the prospect of your disunion with your provinces, and endeavouring to promote it; if they translate, publish, and applaud all the complaints of your discontented colonists, at the same time privately stimulating you to severer measures, let not that *alarm* or offend you. Why should it, since you all mean *the same thing?*

XVIII. If any colony should at their own charge erect a fortress to secure their port against the fleets of a foreign enemy, get your Governor to betray that fortress into your hands. Never think of paying what it cost the country, for that would look, at least, like some regard for justice; but turn it into a citadel to awe the inhabitants and curb their commerce. If they should have lodged in such fortress the very arms they bought and used to aid you in your conquests, seize them all; it will provoke like *ingratitude* added to *robbery*. One admirable effect of these operations will be, to discourage every other colony from erecting such defences, and so your enemies may more easily invade them; to the great disgrace of your government, and of course *the furtherance of your project.*

XIX. Send armies into their country under pretence of protecting the inhabitants; but, instead of garrisoning the forts on their frontiers with those troops, to prevent incursions, demolish those forts, and order the troops into the heart of the country, that the savages may be encouraged to attack the frontiers, and that the troops may be protected by the inhabitants. This will seem to proceed from your ill will or your ignorance, and contribute farther to produce and strengthen an opinion among them, *that you are no longer fit to govern them.*

XX. Lastly, invest the General of your army in

the provinces, with great and unconstitutional powers, and free him from the controul of even your own Civil Governors. Let him have troops enow under his command, with all the fortresses in his possession; and who knows but (like some provincial Generals in the Roman empire, and encouraged by the universal discontent you have produced) he may take it into his head to set up for himself? If he should, and you have carefully practised these few *excellent rules* of mine, take my word for it, all the provinces will immediately join him; and you will that day (if you have not done it sooner) get rid of the trouble of governing them, and all the *plagues* attending their *commerce* and connection from henceforth and for ever.

Q. E. D.

THE EPHEMERA

AN EMBLEM OF HUMAN LIFE

TO MADAME BRILLON

(1778)

You may remember, my dear friend, that when we lately spent that happy day in the delightful garden and sweet society of the Moulin Joly.⁴ I stopt a little in one of our walks, and staid some time behind the company. We had been shown numberless skeletons of a kind of little fly, called an ephemera, whose successive generations, we were told, were bred and expired within the day. I happened to see a living company of them on a leaf, who appeared to be engaged in conversation. You know I understand all the inferior animal tongues. My too great application to the study of them is the best excuse I can give for the little progress I have made in your charming language. I listened through curiosity to the discourse of these little creatures; but as they, in their national vivacity, spoke three or four together, I could make but little of their conversation. I found, however, by some broken expressions that I heard now and then, they were disputing warmly on the merits of two foreign musicians, one a *cousin*, the other a *moscheto*;⁵ in which dispute they spent their time, seemingly as regardless of the shortness of life as if they had

been sure of living a month. Happy people! thought I, you live certainly under a wise, just, and mild government, since you have no public grievances to complain of, nor any subject of contention but the perfections and imperfections of foreign music. I turned my head from them to an old gray-headed one, who was single on another leaf, and talking to himself. Being amused with his soliloquy, I put it down in writing, in hopes it will likewise amuse her to whom I am so much indebted for the most pleasing of all amusements, her delicious company and heavenly harmony.

"It was," said he, "the opinion of learned philosophers of our race, who lived and flourished long before my time, that this vast world, the Moulin Joly, could not itself subsist more than eighteen hours; and I think there was some foundation for that opinion, since, by the apparent motion of the great luminary that gives life to all nature, and which in my time has evidently declined considerably towards the ocean at the end of our earth, it must then finish its course, be extinguished in the waters that surround us, and leave the world in cold and darkness, necessarily producing universal death and destruction. I have lived seven of those hours, a great age, being no less than four hundred and twenty minutes of time. How very few of us continue so long! I have seen generations born, flourish, and expire. My present friends are the children and grandchildren of the friends of my youth, who are now, alas, no more! And I must soon follow them; for, by the course of nature, though still in health, I cannot expect to live above seven or eight minutes longer. What now avails all my toil and labor, in amassing honey-dew on this leaf, which I cannot live to enjoy! What the political struggles I have been engaged in, for the good of my compatriot inhabitants of this bush, or my philosophical studies for the benefit of our race in general! for in politics, what can laws do without morals? Our present race of ephemerae will in a course of minutes become corrupt, like those of other and older bushes, and consequently as wretched. And in philosophy how small our progress! Alas! art is long, and life is short! My friends would comfort me with the idea of a name, they say, I shall leave behind me, and they tell me I have lived long enough to nature and to glory. But what will fame be to an ephemera who no longer exists? And what will become of all history in the eighteenth hour, when the world

⁴ An island in the Seine near Paris.

⁵ At the time this letter was written Paris was divided over the merits of Gluck and Piccini, a German and an Italian composer.

itself, even the whole Moulin Joly, shall come to its end, and be buried in universal ruin?"

To me, after all my eager pursuits, no solid pleasures now remain, but the reflection of a long life spent in meaning well, the sensible conversation of a few good lady ephemeræ, and now and then a kind smile and a tune from the ever amiable *Brillante*.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MADAME HELVETIUS

(1779)

Mortified at the barbarous resolution pronounced by you so positively yesterday evening, that you would remain single the rest of your life as a compliment due to the memory of your husband, I retired to my chamber. Throwing myself upon my bed, I dreamt that I was dead, and was transported to the Elysian Fields.

I was asked whether I wished to see any persons in particular; to which I replied that I wished to see the philosophers. "There are two who live here at hand in this garden; they are good neighbors, and very friendly towards one another."—"Who are they?"—"Socrates and Helvetius."—"I esteem them both highly; but let me see Helvetius first, because I understand a little French, but not a word of Greek." I was conducted to him; he received me with much courtesy, having known me, he said, by character, some time past. He asked me a thousand questions relative to the war, the present state of religion, of liberty, of the government in France. "You do not inquire, then," said I, "after your dear friend, Madame Helvetius; yet she loves you exceedingly. I was in her company not more than an hour ago." "Ah," said he, "you make me recur to my past happiness, which ought to be forgotten in order to be happy here. For many years I could think of nothing but her, though at length I am consoled. I have taken another wife, the most like her that I could find; she is not indeed altogether so handsome, but she has a great fund of wit and good-sense, and her whole study is to please me. She is at this moment gone to fetch the best nectar and ambrosia to regale me; stay here awhile and you will see her." "I perceive," said I, "that your former friend is more faithful to you than you are to her; she has had several good offers, but has refused them all. I will confess to you that I loved

her extremely, but she was cruel to me, and rejected me peremptorily for your sake." "I pity you sincerely," said he, "for she is an excellent woman, handsome and amiable. But do not the Abbé de la R . . . and the Abbé M . . . visit her?"—"Certainly they do; not one of your friends has dropped her acquaintance."—"If you had gained the Abbé M . . . with a bribe of good coffee and cream, perhaps you would have succeeded; for he is as deep a reasoner as Duns Scotus or St. Thomas; he arranges and methodizes his arguments in such a manner that they are almost irresistible. Or if by a fine edition of some old classic you had gained the Abbé de la R . . . to speak *against* you, that would have been still better, as I always observed that when he recommended anything to her, she had a great inclination to do directly the contrary." As he finished these words the new Madame Helvetius entered with the nectar, and I recognized her immediately as my former American friend, Mrs. Franklin! I reclaimed her, but she answered me coldly: "I was a good wife to you for forty-nine years and four months, nearly half a century; let that content you. I have formed a new connection here, which will last to eternity."

Indignant at this refusal of my Eurydice, I immediately resolved to quit those ungrateful shades, and return to this good world again, to behold the sun and you! Here I am; let us *avenge ourselves!*

[Daylight Saving]

TO THE AUTHORS OF
The Journal of Paris

(1784)

MESSEURS,

You often entertain us with accounts of new discoveries. Permit me to communicate to the public, through your paper, one that has lately been made by myself, and which I conceive may be of great utility.

I was the other evening in a grand company, where the new lamp of Messrs. Quinquet and Lange was introduced, and much admired for its splendour; but a general inquiry was made, whether the oil it consumed was not in proportion to the light it afforded, in which case there would be no saving in the use of it. No one present could satisfy us in that point, which all agreed ought to be known, it being a very desir-

able thing to lessen, if possible, the expense of lighting our apartments, when every other article of family expense was so much augmented.

I was pleased to see this general concern for economy, for I love economy exceedingly.

I went home, and to bed, three or four hours after midnight, with my head full of the subject. An accidental sudden noise waked me about six in the morning, when I was surprised to find my room filled with light; and I imagined at first, that a number of those lamps had been brought into it; but, rubbing my eyes, I perceived the light came in at the windows. I got up and looked out to see what might be the occasion of it, when I saw the sun just rising above the horizon, from whence he poured his rays plentifully into my chamber, my domestic having negligently omitted, the preceding evening, to close the shutters.

I looked at my watch, which goes very well, and found it was but six o'clock; and still thinking it something extraordinary that the sun should rise so early, I looked into the almanac, where I found it to be the hour given for his rising on that day. I looked forward, too, and found he was to rise still earlier every day till towards the end of June; and that at no time in the year he retarded his rising so long as till eight o'clock. Your readers, who with me have never seen any signs of sunshine before noon, and seldom regard the astronomical part of the almanac, will be as much astonished as I was, when they hear of his rising so early; and especially when I assure them, *that he gives light as soon as he rises*. I am convinced of this. I am certain of my fact. One cannot be more certain of any fact. I saw it with my own eyes. And, having repeated this observation the three following mornings, I found always precisely the same result.

Yet it so happens, that when I speak of this discovery to others, I can easily perceive by their countenances, though they forbear expressing it in words, that they do not quite believe me. One, indeed, who is a learned natural philosopher, has assured me that I must certainly be mistaken as to the circumstance of the light coming into my room; for it being well known, as he says, that there could be no light abroad at that hour, it follows that none could enter from without; and that of consequence, my windows being accidentally left open, instead of letting in the light, had only served to let out the darkness;

and he used many ingenious arguments to show me how I might, by that means, have been deceived. I owned that he puzzled me a little, but he did not satisfy me; and the subsequent observations I made, as above mentioned, confirmed me in my first opinion.

This event has given rise in my mind to several serious and important reflections. I considered that, if I had not been awakened so early in the morning, I should have slept six hours longer by the light of the sun, and in exchange have lived six hours the following night by candle-light; and, the latter being a much more expensive light than the former, my love of economy induced me to muster up what little arithmetic I was master of, and to make some calculations, which I shall give you, after observing that utility is, in my opinion, the test of value in matters of invention, and that a discovery which can be applied to no use, or is not good for something, is good for nothing.

I took for the basis of my calculation the supposition that there are one hundred thousand families in Paris, and that these families consume in the night half a pound of bougies, or candles, per hour. I think this is a moderate allowance, taking one family with another; for though I believe some consume less, I know that many consume a great deal more. Then estimating seven hours per day as the medium quantity between the time of the sun's rising and ours, he rising during the six following months from six to eight hours before noon, and there being seven hours of course per night in which we burn candles, the account will stand thus;—

In the six months between the 20th of March and the 20th of September, there are

Nights	183
Hours of each night in which we burn candles	7
<hr/>	
Multiplication gives for the total number of hours	1,281
These 1,281 hours multiplied by 100,- 000, the number of inhabitants, give	128,100,000
One hundred twenty-eight millions and one hundred thousand hours, spent at Paris by candle-light, which, at half a pound of wax and tallow per hour, gives the weight of	64,050,000

Sixty-four millions and fifty thousand of pounds, which, estimating the whole at the medium price of thirty sols the pound, makes the sum of ninety-six millions and seventy-five thousand livres tournois 96,075,000

An immense sum! that the city of Paris might save every year, by the economy of using sunshine instead of candles.

If it should be said, that people are apt to be obstinately attached to old customs, and that it will be difficult to induce them to rise before noon, consequently my discovery can be of little use; I answer, *Nil desperandum*.⁶ I believe all who have common sense, as soon as they have learnt from this paper that it is daylight when the sun rises, will contrive to rise with him, and, to compel the rest, I would propose the following regulations;

First. Let a tax be laid of a louis per window, on every window that is provided with shutters to keep out the light of the sun.

Second. Let the same salutary operation of police be made use of, to prevent our burning candles, that inclined us last winter to be more economical in burning wood; that is, let guards be placed in the shops of the wax and tallow chandlers, and no family be permitted to be supplied with more than one pound of candles per week.

Third. Let guards also be posted to stop all coaches, &c. that would pass the streets after sunset, except those of physicians, surgeons, and midwives.

Fourth. Every morning, as soon as the sun rises, let all the bells in every church be set ringing; and if that is not sufficient, let cannon be fired in every street, to wake the sluggards effectually, and make them open their eyes to see their true interest.

All the difficulty will be in the first two or three days; after which the reformation will be as natural and easy as the present irregularity; or, *ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte*.⁷ Oblige a man to rise at four in the morning, and

it is more than probable he will go willingly to bed at eight in the evening; and, having had eight hours of sleep, he will rise more willingly at four in the morning following. But this sum of ninety-six millions and seventy-five thousand livres is not the whole of what may be saved by my economical project. You may observe, that I have calculated upon only one half of the year, and much may be saved in the other, though the days are shorter. Besides, the immense stock of wax and tallow left unconsumed during the summer, will probably make candles much cheaper for the ensuing winter, and continue them cheaper as long as the proposed reformation shall be supported.

For the great benefit of this discovery, thus freely communicated and bestowed by me on the public, I demand neither place, pension, exclusive privilege, nor any other reward whatever. I expect only to have the honour of it. And yet I know there are little, envious minds, who will, as usual, deny me this, and say, that my invention was known to the ancients, and perhaps they may bring passages out of the old books in proof of it. I will not dispute with these people, that the ancients knew not the sun would rise at certain hours; they possibly had, as we have, almanacs that predicted it; but it does not follow thence, that they knew *he gave light as soon as he rose*. This is what I claim as my discovery. If the ancients knew it, it might have been long since forgotten; for it certainly was unknown to the moderns, at least to the Parisians, which to prove, I need use but one plain simple argument. They are as well instructed, judicious, and prudent a people as exist anywhere in the world, all professing, like myself, to be lovers of economy; and, from the many heavy taxes required from them by the necessities of the state, have surely an abundant reason to be economical. I say it is impossible that so sensible a people, under such circumstances, should have lived so long by the smoky, unwholesome, and enormously expensive light of candles, if they had really known, that they might have had as much pure light of the sun for nothing. I am, &c.

A SUBSCRIBER.

⁶ Nothing is to be despaired of.

⁷ It is only the first step which costs.

JOHN LOGAN

1725? - 1780

The remarkable document known as "Logan's Speech" was first published in Colonial newspapers in 1774 and later given wider currency in Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1784). In this book, which was written at the request of Barbé de Marbois, Secretary of the French Legation in the United States, Jefferson took great pains to refute the widely held European notion that in the New World human and animal life represented a somewhat degenerate stage as compared to that of the Old World. He quoted Logan's "Speech" to show that the American Indian was far from being a degenerate savage. He wrote: "I may challenge the whole orations of Demosthenes and Cicero, and of any more eminent orator, if Europe has furnished more eminent, to produce a single passage, superior to the speech of Logan, a Mingo chief, to Lord Dunmore, when governor of this state [Virginia]."

The chieftain's Indian name was Tahgahjute, but he took the name of John (or James) Logan. He was long friendly to the whites, but the Yellow Creek massacre of April, 1774, in which his family were murdered, set him upon the warpath. The "Speech" is in fact not an oration but a written communication which Logan delivered to John Gibson, who translated it and carried it to the Governor at the conclusion of Dunmore's War. Later historians have doubted whether Colonel Cresap was responsible for the murder of Logan's relatives; but Jefferson, who in 1797 collected affidavits from men who were in a position to know the facts, thought him guilty. In later years Logan became a slave to drink and was finally killed, it is said, by a cousin or nephew. See Lawrence C. Wroth's sketch in the *D. A. B.*

SPEECH

(1774; 1774)

I appeal to any white man to say, if ever he entered Logan's cabin hungry, and he gave him not meat: if ever he came cold and naked, and he clothed him not. During the course of the last long and bloody war Logan remained idle in

his cabin, an advocate for peace. Such was my love for the whites, that my countrymen pointed as they passed, and said, "Logan is the friend of white men." I had even thought to have lived 5 with you, but for the injuries of one man. Colonel Cresap, the last spring, in cold blood, and unprovoked, murdered all the relations of Logan, not even sparing my women and children. There runs not a drop of my blood in the

PATRIOTIC SONGS-----AND BALLADS

veins of any living creature. This called on me for revenge. I have sought it. I have killed many I have fully glutted my vengeance: for my country I rejoice at the beams of peace. But

do not harbour a thought that mine is the joy of fear. Logan never felt fear. He will not turn on his heel to save his life. Who is there to mourn for Logan?—Not one.

PATRIOTIC SONGS AND BALLADS

I knew a very wise man that believed that . . . if a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation.

—Attributed to Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun.

The most important literature which grew out of the American Revolution was of course political, and yet the songs and ballads written at the time have considerable interest as an early expression of the national spirit. Most of them are anonymous, and on the whole they are inferior to the songs and ballads produced by the Civil War. We have included one of many Tory songs, "The Congress," which serves to remind us that the Revolutionary statesmen were not universally regarded as great and wise men.

A LIBERTY SONG

JOHN DICKINSON (1732-1808)

(1768)

John Dickinson was the author of twelve *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*, which appeared in the *Pennsylvania Chronicle* in 1767-1768 and were published in book form in the latter year. They are an excellent conservative statement of the position of the colonists in their dispute with England. Some of the lines in "A Liberty Song" were written by Dickinson's friend Arthur Lee.

Come join hand in hand, brave Americans all,
And rouse your bold hearts at fair Liberty's call; 15

No tyrannous acts shall suppress your just claim,
Nor stain with dishonor America's name.

In freedom we're born, and in freedom we'll
live;

Our purses are ready,

Steady, Friends, steady,

Not as *slaves*, but as *freemen* our money we'll
give.

Our worthy forefathers—let's give them a cheer—
To climates unknown did courageously steer;
'Thro' oceans to deserts, for freedom they came,
And, dying, bequeath'd us their freedom and
fame.

Their generous bosoms all dangers despis'd,
So highly, so wisely, their birthrights they priz'd;
We'll keep what they gave, we will piously keep,
Nor frustrate their toils on the land or the deep.

The Tree, their own hands had to Liberty rear'd,
They lived to behold growing strong and rever'd;
With transport then cried,—“Now our wishes
we gain,
For our children shall gather the fruits of our
pain.”

How sweet are the labors that freemen endure,
That they shall enjoy all the profit, secure,—
No more such sweet labors Americans know,
If Britons shall reap what Americans sow.

Swarms of placemen and pensioners soon will
appear,
Like locusts deforming the charms of the year
Suns vainly will rise, showers vainly descend,
If we are to drudge for what others shall spend.

Then join hand in hand brave Americans all,
By uniting we stand, by dividing we fall;
In so righteous a cause let us hope to succeed,
For Heaven approves of each generous deed.

All ages shall speak with amaze and applause,
Of the courage we'll show in support of our laws;
To die we can bear,—but to serve we disdain,
For shame is to freemen more dreadful than pain.

This bumper I crown for our sovereign's health,
And this for Britannia's glory and wealth;
That wealth, and that glory immortal may be,
If she is but just, and we are but free.

In freedom we're born, &c.

VIRGINIA BANISHING TEA

(1774)

Published in the *Pennsylvania Journal* for Sep-
tember 14, 1774, as “By a Young Woman of Vir-
ginia.”

Begone, pernicious, baneful tea,
With all Pandora's ills possessed!
Hyson, no more beguiled by thee
My noble sons shall be oppressed.

• 120 •

To Britain fly, where gold enslaves,
And venal men their birth-right sell;
Tell *North* and his bribed clan of knaves
Their bloody acts were made in hell.

5

In Henry's reign those acts began
Which sacred rules of justice broke;
North now pursues the hellish plan,
To fix on us his slavish yoke.

10

But we oppose, and will be free,
This great good cause we will defend;
Nor bribe, nor Gage, nor North's decree
Shall make us “at his feet to bend.”

15

From Anglia's ancient sons we came,
Those heroes who for freedom fought:
In freedom's cause we'll match their fame,
By their example greatly taught.

20

Our king we love, but North we hate
Nor will to him submission own;
If death's our doom, we'll brave our fate,
But pay allegiance to the throne.

25

Then rouse, my sons! from slavery free
Your suffering homes, from God's high wrath!
Gird on your steel: give *liberty*
To all who follow in our path!

NATHAN HALE

(1776)

Nathan Hale was hanged by the British as a spy
on September 22, 1776.

35

The breezes went steadily thro' the tall pines,
A saying “Oh hu-ush!” a saying “Oh hu-ush!”
As stilly stole by a bold legion of horse,
For Hale in the bush, for Hale in the bush.

40

“Keep still!” said the thrush as she nestled her
young,

45

In a nest by the road, in a nest by the road;
“For the tyrants are near, and with them appear
What bodes us no good, what bodes us no
good.”

The brave captain heard it and thought of his
home,

50

In a cot by the brook, in a cot by the brook,
With mother and sister and memories dear,
He so gaily forsook, he so gaily forsook.

PATRIOTIC SONGS-----AND BALLADS

Cooling shades of the night were coming apace,
The tattoo had beat, the tattoo had beat:
The noble one sprang from his dark lurking-
place

To make his retreat, to make his retreat.

He warily trod on the dry rustling leaves,
As he pass'd thro' the wood, as he pass'd thro'
the wood,
And silently gain'd his rude launch on the shore,
As she play'd with the flood, as she play'd with
the flood.

The guards of the camp, on that dark, dreary
night,
Had a murderous will, had a murderous will:
They took him and bore him afar from the shore,
To a hut on the hill, to a hut on the hill.

No mother was there, nor a friend who could
cheer,
In that little stone cell, in that little stone cell.
But he trusted in love from his father above:
In his heart all was well, in his heart all was
well.

An ominous owl with his solemn bass voice
Sat moaning hard by, sat moaning hard by:
"The tyrant's proud minions most gladly rejoice,
For he must soon die, for he must soon die."

The brave fellow told them, no thing he
restrain'd,
The cruel gen'ral, the cruel gen'ral;
His errand from camp, of the ends to be gain'd;
And said that was all, and said that was all.

They took him and bound him and bore him
away,
Down the hill's grassy side, down the hill's
grassy side.

'Twas there the base hirelings, in royal array,
His cause did deride, his cause did deride.

Five minutes were given, short moments, no
more,

For him to repent, for him to repent:
He pray'd for his mother, he ask'd not another;
To Heaven he went, to Heaven he went.

The faith of a martyr the tragedy shew'd,
As he trod the last stage, as he trod the last
stage;

And Britons will shudder at gallant Hale's blood,
As his words do presage, as his words do
presage:

5 "Thou pale king of terrors, thou life's gloomy
foe,

Go frighten the slave, go frighten the slave;
Tell tyrants to you their allegiance they owe:
No fears for the brave, no fears for the brave."

THE CONGRESS

(1776)

15 The sentiments expressed in this Tory song are
typical.

Ye Tories all, rejoice and sing
Success to George our gracious king;
The faithful subjects tribute bring
And execrate the Congress.

These hardy knaves and stupid fools,
Some apish and pragmatic mules,
Some servile acquiescing tools,—
25 These, these compose the Congress.

When Jove resolved to send a curse,
And all the woes of life rehearse,
Not plague, not famine, but much worse—
30 He cursed us with a Congress.

Then peace forsook this helpless shore,
Then cannons blazed with horrid roar;
We hear of blood, death, wounds, and gore,
The offspring of the Congress.

Imperial Rome from scoundrels rose;
Her grandeur's hailed in verse and prose;
Venice the dregs of sea compose;
40 So sprung the mighty Congress.

When insects vile emerge to light,
They take their short, inglorious flight,
Then sink again to native night—
An emblem of the Congress!

With freeman's rights they wanton play;
At their command, we fast and pray;
With worthless paper they us pay—
50 A fine device of Congress.

With poverty and dire distress,
With standing armies us oppress,

THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD-----1765-1789

Whole troops to Pluto swiftly press,
As victims to the Congress.

Time-serving priests to zealots preach,
Who king and parliament impeach;
Seditious lessons to us teach
At the command of Congress.

Good Lord! disperse this venal tribe;
Their doctrine let no fools imbibe—
Let Balaam no more asses ride,
Nor burdens bear to Congress.

With puffs, and flams, and gasconade,
With stupid jargon they bravade:
"We transports take, Quebec invade,
With laurels crown the Congress.

"Our mushroom champions they dragoon;
We cry out hero, not poltroon,
The next campaign we'll storm the moon,
And there proclaim the Congress."

In shades below Montgomery's ghost
Is welcomed to the Stygian coast;
Congenial traitors see and boast
Th' unhappy days of Congress.

Old Catiline, and Cromwell too,
Jack Cade and his seditious crew,
Hail brother-rebel at first view,
And hope to meet the Congress.

The world's amazed to see the pest
The tranquil land with wars infest;
Britannia puts them to the test,
And tries the strength of Congress.

O goddess, hear our hearty prayers;
Confound the villains by the ears;
Disperse the plebeians, try the peers;
And execute the Congress.

See, see, our hope begins to dawn!
Bold Carleton scours our Northern lawn;
The sons of faction sigh forlorn;
Dejected is the Congress.

Cinton, Burgoyne and gallant Howe,
Will soon reward our conduct true,
And to each traitor give his due;
Perdition waits the Congress.

See noble Dunmore keeps his post;
Marauds and ravages the coast;
Despises Lee and all his host,
That hare brain tool of Congress.

5

There's Washington and all his men—
Where Howe had one, the goose had ten—
March'd up the hill, and down again,
And sent returns to Congress.

10

Prepare, prepare, my friends, prepare
For scenes of blood, the field of war;
To royal standard we'll repair,
And curse the haughty Congress.

15

Huzza! Huzza! we thrice huzza!
Return peace, harmony, and law!
Restore such times as once we saw,
And bid adieu to Congress.

20

BOLD HATHORNE

The hero of this ballad is Daniel Hathorne, the
grandfather of Nathaniel Hawthorne the novelist
His ship was *The Fair American*.

25

The twenty-second of August,
Before the close of day,
All hands on board of our privateer,
We got her under weigh;
We kept the eastern shore along,
For forty leagues or more;
Then our departure took for sea,
From the isle Mauhegan shore.

35

Bold Hathorne was commander,
A man of real worth;
Old England's cruel tyranny
Induced him to go forth.
She, with relentless fury,
Was plundering all our coast;
And thought, because her strength was great,
Our glorious cause was lost.

45

Yet boast not, haughty Britons,
Of power and dignity,
By land thy conquering armies,
Thy matchless strength at sea;
Since taught by numerous instances
Americans can fight,
With valor can equip their stand,
Your armies put to flight.

50

PATRIOTIC SONGS-----AND BALLADS

Now farewell to fair America,
Farewell our friends and wives;
We trust in Heaven's peculiar care
For to protect their lives,
To prosper our intended cruise
Upon the raging main,
And to preserve our dearest friends
Till we return again.

The wind it being leading,
It bore us on our way,
As far unto the southward
As the Gulf of Florida;
Where we fell in with a British ship,
Bound homeward from the main.
We gave her two bow-chasers,
And she returned the same.

We hauled up our courses.
And so prepared for fight;
The contest held four glasses,
Until the dusk of night;
Then having sprung our main-mast,
And had so large a sea,
We dropped astern and left our chase
Till the returning day.

Next morn we fished¹ our main-mast.
The ship still being nigh,
All hands made for engaging,
Our chance once more to try.
But wind and sea being boisterous
Our cannon would not bear;
We thought it quite imprudent
And so we left her there.

We cruised to the eastward,
Near the coast of Portingale;
In longitude of twenty-seven
We saw a lofty sail.
We gave her chase, and soon we saw
She was a British scow²
Standing for fair America,
With troops for General Howe.

Our captain did inspect her
With glasses, and he said,
"My boys, she means to fight us,
But be you not afraid;

¹ Repaired.

² A small sailing vessel.

All hands repair to quarters,
See everything is clear,
We'll give her a broadside, my boys,
As soon as she comes near."

5 She was prepared with nettings,
And her men were well secured,
And bore directly for us,
And put us close on board;
10 When the cannon roared like thunder,
And the muskets fired amain;
But soon we were along-side
And grappled to her chain.

15 And now the scene it altered,
The cannon ceased to roar;
We fought with swords and boarding pikes
One glass or something more,
Till British pride and glory
20 No longer dared to stay,
But cut the Yankee grapplings,
And quickly bore away.

Our case was not so desperate
25 As plainly might appear;
Yet sudden death did enter
On board our privateer.
Mahoney, Crew, and Clemmons,
The valiant and the brave,
30 Fell glorious in the contest,
And met a watery grave.

Ten other men were wounded
Among our warlike crew,
35 With them our noble captain,
To whom all praise is due;
To him and all our officers
Let's give a hearty cheer;
Success to fair America,
40 And our good privateer!

THE BATTLE OF THE KEGS

(1778)

FRANCIS HOPKINSON (1737-1791)

45 Hopkinson, born in Philadelphia, was one of the most versatile men of his time. He was a poet, a composer, a Signer of the Declaration of Independence, a member of the committee which drafted the Articles of Confederation, and designer of the flag of the United States. His prose and verse both possess some distinction. To the poem given below Hopkinson attached a note:

"This ballad was occasioned by a real incident. Certain machines, in the form of kegs, chaig'd with gun powder, were sent down the river to annoy the British shipping then at Philadelphia. The danger of these machines being discovered, the British manned the wharfs and shipping, and discharged their small arms and cannons at every thing they saw floating in the river during the ebb tide."

George E. Hastings, *The Life and Works of Francis Hopkinson* (1926) gives a full account of Hopkinson's various achievements

Gallants attend and hear a friend
Trill forth harmonious ditty,
Strange things I'll tell which late befel
In Philadelphia city.

'Twas early day, as poets say,
Just when the sun was rising,
A soldier stood on a log of wood,
And saw a thing surprising.

As in amaze he stood to gaze
The truth can't be denied, sir,
He spied a score of kegs or more
Come floating down the tide, sir.

A sailor too in jerkin blue,
This strange appearance viewing,
First damn'd his eyes, in great surprise,
Then said, some mischief's brewing.

These kegs, I'm told, the rebels bold,
Pack'd up like pickling herring;
And they're come down t'attack the town,
In this new way of ferrying.

The soldier flew, the sailor too,
And scar'd almost to death, sir,
Wore out their shoes, to spread the news,
And ran till out of breath, sir.

Now up and down throughout the town,
Most frantic scenes were acted;
And some ran here, and others there,
Like men almost distracted.

Some fire cry'd, which some denied,
But said the earth had quakèd;
And girls and boys, with hideous noise,
Ran through the streets half naked.

Sir William¹ he, snug as a flea,
Lay all this time a snoring,

¹ Howe, the British general.

Nor dreamed of harm as he lay warm,
In bed with Mrs Loring.

Now in a fright, he starts upright,
Awak'd by such a clatter;
He rubs both eyes, and boldly cries,
For God's sake, what's the matter?

At his bed-side he then espy'd,
Sir Erskine at command, sir,
Upon one foot, he had one boot,
And th' other in his hand, sir.

"Arise, arise," Sir Erskine cries,
The rebels—more's the pity,
Without a boat are all afloat,
And rang'd before the city.

"The motley crew, in vessels new,
With Satan for their guide, sir,
Pack'd up in bags, or wooden kegs,
Come driving down the tide, sir.

"Therefore prepare for bloody war,
These kegs must all be routed,
Or surely we despised shall be,
And British courage doubted."

The royal band, now ready stand
All rang'd in dread array, sir,
With stomach stout to see it out,
And make a bloody day, sir.

The cannons roar from shore to shore,
The small arms make a rattle;
Since wars began I'm sure no man
E'er saw so strange a battle.

The rebel dales, the rebel vales,
With rebel trees surrounded;
The distant woods, the hills and floods,
With rebel echoes sounded.

The fish below swam to and fro,
Attack'd from ev'ry quarter;
Why sure, thought they, the devil's to pay,
'Mongst folks above the water.

The kegs, 'tis said, tho' strongly made,
Of rebel staves and hoops, sir,
Could not oppose their powerful foes,
The conq'ring British troops, sir.

PATRIOTIC SONGS-----AND BALLADS

From morn to night these men of might
Display'd amazing courage,
And when the sun was fairly down,
Retir'd to sup their porrage.

An hundred men with each a pen,
Or more upon my word, sir,
It is most true would be too few,
Their valour to record, sir.

Such feats did they perform that day
Against these wicked kegs, sir,
That years to come, if they get home,
They'll make their boasts and brags, sir.

THE VOLUNTEER BOYS

(1780)

This song, sometimes ascribed to Henry Archer, owes something to the song, "Let the Toast Pass," in Sheridan's *The School for Scandal*, as may be seen from the opening stanza:

*Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen;
Here's to the widow of fifty;
Here's to the flaunting extravagant quean,
And here's to the housewife that's thrifty.
Let the toast pass,
Drink to the lass,*

I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

Hence with the lover who sighs o'er his wine,
Chloes and Phillises toasting,

Hence with the slave who will whumper and
whine,

Of ardor and constancy boasting.

Hence with love's joys,

Follies and noise,

The toast that I give is the Volunteer Boys.

Nobles and beauties and such common toasts,

Those who admire may drink, sir;

Fill up the glass to the volunteer hosts,

Who never from danger will shrink, sir.

Let mirth appear,

Every heart cheer,

The toast that I give is the brave volunteer.

Here's to the squire who goes to parade,

Here's to the citizen soldier;

Here's to the merchant who fights for his trade,
Whom danger increasing makes bolder.

Let mirth appear,

Union is here,

5 The toast that I give is the brave volunteer.

Here's to the lawyer, who, leaving the bar,
Hastens where honor doth lead, sir,

Changing the gown for the ensigns of war,

10 The cause of his country to plead, sir.

Freedom appears,

Every heart cheers,

And calls for the health of the law volunteers.

15 Here's to the soldier, though batter'd in wars,
And sale to his farm-house retir'd;

When called by his country, ne'er thinks of his
scars,

With ardor to join us inspir'd.

20 Bright fame appears,

Trophies uprears,

To veteran chiefs who became volunteers.

Here's to the farmer who dares to advance

25 To harvest of honor with pleasure;

Who with a slave the most skilful in France,

A sword for his country would measure.

Hence with cold fear,

Heroes rise here;

30 The ploughman is chang'd to the stout volunteer.

Here's to the peer, first in senate and field,

Whose actions to titles and grace, sir,

Whose spirit undaunted would never yet yield

35 To a foe, to a pension or place, sir.

Gratitude here,

Toasts to the peer,

Who adds to his titles, "the brave volunteer."

40 Thus the bold bands for old Jersey's defence,

The muse hath with rapture review'd, sir;

With our volunteer boys, as our verses
commence,

With our volunteer boys they conclude, sir.

45 Discord or noise,

Ne'er damp our joys,

But health and success to the volunteer boys.

THOMAS PAINE

1737 - 1809

As for the rebels, it must be admitted that, though they are occasionally foul-mouthed and slovenly, and often vain, noisy, and altogether distasteful, they are the power that moves the world. I sometimes wish I had the courage and the character to be a rebel myself.

—GAMALIEL BRADFORD, "Thomas Paine" (1923).

In November, 1774, Thomas Paine landed in Philadelphia. Bankrupt, without a position, separated from his wife, he had left England for America at the suggestion of Benjamin Franklin. He became the ablest propagandist for the cause of the Revolution. In a series of pamphlets, *Common Sense* and *The American Crisis*, he advocated independence and urged armed resistance to the British. Washington, who knew their value, had some of these papers read to his troops. In the first number of the *Crisis* Paine began: "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it *now*, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman."

"Where liberty is, there is my country," Franklin once said; Paine's reply was, "Where liberty is not, there is mine." From 1787 to 1802 Paine was in France and England. *The Rights of Man* (1792), a reply to Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, was regarded in England as a libelous work, and Paine fled to Paris. He was outlawed in England, but he held a seat in the French Convention and was appointed member of a committee to draw up a new constitution. He incurred the hostility of the French radicals when he protested against the execution of Louis XVI. He was in prison most of the year 1794, until James Monroe got him released. He had already written a part of *The Age of Reason* (1794-1795), a statement of his religious views.

Jefferson assisted him to return to America in 1802. Paine's religious views—he was a Deist—made him unpopular. He was even denied the right to vote on the ground that he was not an American citizen. In poverty and ill health, he lived on until 1809.

His attempts at the "higher criticism" of the Bible have long militated against the full recognition of his importance as a writer. Theodore Roosevelt, who should have known better, referred to him as a "filthy little atheist." The quality of Paine's writing is admirably suggested in an entry which Gamaliel Bradford made in his journal, on June 11, 1922, while preparing his essay on Paine:

"Arrived today at the first reading of Paine's *Works*, and instantly perceive what I had not quite fathomed before, the secret of his greatness, such as he is. The man is a writer. . . . Why, he is a real writer, a master of style, almost of the quality of Swift and Voltaire, if not quite, because he had not the depth of the one and the fire of the other. But what speed, what ease, what inimitable, careless, natural mastery of words! Why, these anonymous essays which Conway pulls out of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, who can write like that today?"

Among the numerous editions of Paine's writings, perhaps the best is Moncure D. Conway's (1894-1895). There are biographies by Conway, W. M. Van der Weyde, M. A. Best, Frank Smith, and W. E. Woodward (1945). There is a brilliant but perhaps not altogether sound character sketch of Paine in Gamaliel Bradford's *Damaged Souls* (1923). Harry Hayden Clark's *Thomas Paine: Representative Selections* (1944) contains a good bibliography and an illuminating introductory essay.

THOUGHTS ON THE PRESENT STATE OF AMERICAN AFFAIRS

from COMMON SENSE

(January, 1776)

In the following pages I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense: and have no other preliminaries to settle with the reader, than that he will divest himself of prejudice and prepossession, and suffer his reason and his feelings to determine for themselves: that he will put on, or rather that he will not put off, the true character of a man, and generously enlarge his views beyond the present day.

Volumes have been written on the subject of the struggle between England and America. Men of all ranks have embarked in the controversy, from different motives, and with various designs; but all have been ineffectual and the period of debate is closed. Arms as the last resource decide the contest; the appeal was the choice of the King and the Continent has accepted the challenge.

It hath been reported of the late Mr. Pelham (who tho' an able minister was not without his faults) that on his being attacked in the House of Commons on the score that his measures were

only of a temporary kind, replied, "*they will last my time.*" Should a thought so fatal and unmanly possess the Colonies in the present contest, the name of ancestors will be remembered by future generations with detestation.

The Sun never shined on a cause of greater worth. 'Tis not the affair of a City, a County, a Province, or a Kingdom, but of a Continent—of at least one eighth part of the habitable Globe. 'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in the contest, and will be more or less affected even to the end of time, by the proceedings now. Now is the seed-time of Continental union, faith and honour. The least fracture now will be like a name engraved with the point of a pin on the tender rind of a young oak; the wound would enlarge with the tree, and posterity read it in full grown characters.

By referring the matter from argument to arms, a new æra for politics is struck—a new method of thinking hath arisen. All plans, proposals, &c prior to the nineteenth of April, *i. e.* to the commencement of hostilities, are like the almanacks of the last year; which tho' proper then, are superseded and useless now. Whatever was advanced by the advocates on either side of the question then, terminated in one and the same point, *viz.* a union with Great-Britain; the

only difference between the parties was the method of effecting it; the one proposing force, the other friendship; but it hath so far happened that the first hath failed, and the second hath withdrawn her influence.

As much hath been said of the advantages of reconciliation, which, like an agreeable dream, hath passed away and left us as we were, it is but right that we should examine the contrary side of the argument, and enquire into some of the many material injuries which these Colonies sustain, and always will sustain, by being connected with and dependant on Great-Britain. To examine that connection and dependance, on the principles of nature and common sense, to see what we have to trust to, if separated, and what we are to expect, if dependant.

I have heard it asserted by some, that as America has flourished under her former connection with Great-Britain, the same connection is necessary towards her future happiness, and will always have the same effect. Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument. We may as well assert that because a child has thrived upon milk, that it is never to have meat, or that the first twenty years of our lives is to become a precedent for the next twenty. But even this is admitting more than is true; for I answer roundly, that America would have flourished as much, and probably much more, had no European power taken any notice of her. The commerce by which she hath enriched herself are the necessities of life, and will always have a market while eating is the custom of Europe.

But she has protected us, say some. That she hath engrossed us is true, and defended the Continent at our expense as well as her own, is admitted; and she would have defended Turkey from the same motive, *viz.* for the sake of trade and dominion.

Alas! we have been long led away by ancient prejudices and made large sacrifices to superstition. We have boasted the protection of Great-Britain, without considering that her motive was *interest*, not *attachment*; and that she did not protect us from *our enemies on our account*; but from *her enemies on her own account*, from those who had no quarrel with us on any *other account*, and who will always be our enemies on the *same account*. Let Britain waive her pretensions to the Continent, or the Continent throw

off the dependance, and we should be at peace with France and Spain, were they at war with Britain. The miseries of Hanover[*s*] last war ought to warn us against connections.

It hath lately been asserted in parliament, that the Colonies have no relation to each other but through the Parent Country, *i. e.* that Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, and so on for the rest, are sister Colonies by the way of England; this is certainly a very roundabout way of proving relationship, but it is the nearest and only true way of proving enmity (or enemyship, if I may so call it). France and Spain never were, nor perhaps ever will be, our enemies as *Americans*, but as our being the *subjects of Great Britain*.

But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upon their families; wherefore, the assertion, if true, turns to her reproach; but it happens not to be true, or only partly so, and the phrase *parent* or *mother country* hath been jesuitically adopted by the King and his parasites, with a low papistical design of gaining an unfair bias on the credulous weakness of our minds. Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America. This new World hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from *every part* of Europe. Hither have they fled, not from the tender embraces of the mother, but from the cruelty of the monster; and it is so far true of England, that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home, pursues their descendants still.

In this extensive quarter of the globe, we forget the narrow limits of three hundred and sixty miles (the extent of England) and carry our friendship on a larger scale; we claim brotherhood with every European Christian, and triumph in the generosity of the sentiment.

It is pleasant to observe by what regular gradations we surmount the force of local prejudices, as we enlarge our acquaintance with the World. A man born in any town in England divided into parishes, will naturally associate most with his fellow parishioners (because their interests in many cases will be common) and distinguish him by the name of *neighbour*; if he meet him but a few miles from home, he drops the narrow idea of a street, and salutes him by the name of *townsman*; if he travel out of the county and meet him in any other, he forgets the minor divisions

of street and town, and calls him *countryman*, *i. e. countyman*. but if in their foreign excursions they should associate in France, or any other part of *Europe*, their local remembrance would be enlarged into that of *Englishmen*. And by a just parity of reasoning, all Europeans meeting in America, or any other quarter of the globe, are *countrymen*; for England, Holland, Germany, or Sweden, when compared with the whole, stand in the same places on the larger scale, which the divisions of street, town, and county do on the smaller ones; Distinctions too limited for Continental minds. Not one third of the inhabitants, even of this province [Pennsylvania], are of English descent. Wherefore, I reprobate the phrase of Parent or Mother Country applied to England only, as being false, selfish, narrow and ungenerous.

But, admitting that we were all of English descent, what does it amount to? Nothing Britain, being now an open enemy, extinguishes every other name and title: and to say that reconciliation is our duty, is truly farcical. The first king of England, of the present line (William the Conqueror) was a Frenchman, and half the peers of England are descendants from the same country; wherefore, by the same method of reasoning, England ought to be governed by France.

Much hath been said of the united strength of Britain and the Colonies, that in conjunction they might bid defiance to the world: But this is mere presumption; the fate of war is uncertain, neither do the expressions mean any thing; for this continent would never suffer itself to be drained of inhabitants, to support the British arms in either Asia, Africa, or Europe.

Besides, what have we to do with setting the world at defiance? Our plan is commerce, and that, well attended to, will secure us the peace and friendship of all Europe; because it is the interest of all Europe to have America a free port. Her trade will always be a protection, and her barrenness of gold and silver secure her from invaders.

I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation to show a single advantage that this continent can reap by being connected with Great Britain. I repeat the challenge; not a single advantage is derived. Our corn will fetch its price in any market in Europe, and our imported goods must be paid for, buy them where we will.

But the injuries and disadvantages which we sustain by that connection, are without number; and our duty to mankind at large, as well as to ourselves, instruct us to renounce the alliance: because, any submission to, or dependance on, Great Britain, tends directly to involve this Continent in European wars and quarrels, and set us at variance with nations who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom we have neither anger nor complaint. As Europe is our market for trade, we ought to form no partial connection with any part of it. It is the true interest of America to steer clear of European contentions, which she never can do, while, by her dependance on Britain, she is made the make-weight in the scale of British politics.

Europe is too thickly planted with Kingdoms to be long at peace, and whenever a war breaks out between England and any foreign power, the trade of America goes to ruin, *because of her connection with Britain*. The next war may not turn out like the last, and should it not, the advocates for reconciliation now will be wishing for separation then, because neutrality in that case would be a safer convoy than a man of war. Every thing that is right or reasonable pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, 'TIS TIME TO PART. Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America is a strong and natural proof that the authority of the one over the other, was never the design of Heaven. The time likewise at which the Continent was discovered, adds weight to the argument, and the manner in which it was peopled, encreases the force of it. The Reformation was preceded by the discovery of America. As if the Almighty graciously meant to open a sanctuary to the persecuted in future years, when home should afford neither friendship nor safety.

The authority of Great Britain over this continent, is a form of government, which sooner or later must have an end: And a serious mind can draw no true pleasure by looking forward, under the painful and positive conviction that what he calls "the present constitution" is merely temporary. As parents, we can have no joy, knowing that this government is not sufficiently lasting to ensure any thing which we may bequeath to posterity: And by a plain method of argument, as we are running the next generation into debt, we ought to do the work of it, otherwise we use

them meanly and pitifully. In order to discover the line of our duty rightly, we should take our children in our hand, and fix our station a few years farther into life; that eminence will present a prospect which a few present fears and prejudices conceal from our sight.

Though I would carefully avoid giving unnecessary offence, yet I am inclined to believe, that all those who espouse the doctrine of reconciliation, may be included within the following descriptions.

Interested men, who are not to be trusted, weak men who *cannot* see, prejudiced men who will not see, and a certain set of moderate men who think better of the European world than it deserves; and this last class, by an ill-judged deliberation, will be the cause of more calamities to this Continent than all the other three.

It is the good fortune of many to live distant from the scene of present sorrow; the evil is not sufficiently brought to their doors to make them feel the precariousness with which all American property is possessed. But let our imaginations transport us a few moments to Boston; that seat of wretchedness will teach us wisdom, and instruct us for ever to renounce a power in whom we can have no trust. The inhabitants of that unfortunate city who but a few months ago were in ease and affluence, have now no other alternative than to stay and starve, or turn out to beg. Endangered by the fire of their friends if they continue within the city, and plundered by the soldiery if they leave it, in their present situation they are prisoners without the hope of redemption, and in a general attack for their relief they would be exposed to the fury of both armies.

Men of passive tempers look somewhat lightly over the offences of Great Britain, and, still hoping for the best, are apt to call out, *Come, come, we shall be friends again for all this*. But examine the passions and feelings of mankind: bring the doctrine of reconciliation to the touchstone of nature, and then tell me whether you can hereafter love, honour, and faithfully serve the power that hath carried fire and sword into your land? If you cannot do all these, then are you only deceiving yourselves, and by your delay bringing ruin upon posterity. Your future connection with Britain, whom you can neither love nor honour, will be forced and unnatural, and being formed only on the plan of present convenience, will in a little time fall into a relapse

more wretched than the first. But if you say, you can still pass the violations over, then I ask, hath your house been burnt? Hath your property been destroyed before your face? Are your wife and children destitute of a bed to lie on, or bread to live on? Have you lost a parent or a child by their hands, and yourself the ruined and wretched survivor? If you have not, then are you not a judge of those who have. But if you have, and can still shake hands with the murderers, then are you unworthy the name of husband, father, friend, or lover, and whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward, and the spirit of a sycophant.

This is not inflaming or exaggerating matters, but trying them by those feelings and affections which nature justifies, and without which we should be incapable of discharging the social duties of life, or enjoying the felicities of it. I mean not to exhibit horror for the purpose of provoking revenge, but to awaken us from fatal and unmanly slumbers, that we may pursue determinately some fixed object. 'Tis not in the power of Britain or of Europe to conquer America, if she doth not conquer herself by delay and timidity. The present winter is worth an age if rightly employed, but if lost or neglected the whole Continent will partake of the misfortune; and there is no punishment which that man doth not deserve, be he who, or what, or where he will, that may be the means of sacrificing a season so precious and useful.

'Tis repugnant to reason, to the universal order of things, to all examples from former ages, to suppose that this Continent can long remain subject to any external power. The most sanguine in Britain doth not think so. The utmost stretch of human wisdom cannot, at this time, compass a plan, short of separation, which can promise the continent even a year's security. Reconciliation is *now* a fallacious dream. Nature hath deserted the connection, and art cannot supply her place. For, as Milton wisely expresses, "never can true reconcilement grow where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep."

Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual. Our prayers have been rejected with disdain; and hath tended to convince us that nothing flatters vanity or confirms obstinacy in Kings more than repeated petitioning—and nothing hath contributed more than that very measure to make the Kings of Europe absolute.

Witness Denmark and Sweden. Wherefore, since nothing but blows will do, for God's sake let us come to a final separation, and not leave the next generation to be cutting throats under the violated unmeaning names of parent and child.

To say they will never attempt it again is idle and visionary; we thought so at the repeal of the stamp act, yet a year or two undeceived us; as well may we suppose that nations which have been once defeated will never renew the quarrel.

As to government matters, 'tis not in the power of Britain to do this continent justice: the business of it will soon be too weighty and intricate to be managed with any tolerable degree of convenience, by a power so distant from us, and so very ignorant of us; for if they cannot conquer us, they cannot govern us. To be always running three or four thousand miles with a tale or a petition, waiting four or five months for an answer, which, when obtained, requires five or six more to explain it in, will in a few years be looked upon as folly and childishness. There was a time when it was proper, and there is a proper time for it to cease.

Small islands not capable of protecting themselves are the proper objects for government to take under their care; but there is something absurd, in supposing a Continent to be perpetually governed by an island. In no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet; and as England and America, with respect to each other, reverse the common order of nature, it is evident that they belong to different systems. England to Europe: America to itself.

I am not induced by motives of pride, party, or resentment to espouse the doctrine of separation and independence; I am clearly, positively, and conscientiously persuaded that it is the true interest of this Continent to be so; that every thing short of *that* is mere patchwork, that it can afford no lasting felicity,—that it is leaving the sword to our children, and shrinking back at a time when a little more, a little further, would have rendered this Continent the glory of the earth.

As Britain hath not manifested the least inclination towards a compromise, we may be assured that no terms can be obtained worthy the acceptance of the Continent, or any ways equal to the expence of blood and treasure we have been already put to.

The object contended for, ought always to bear some just proportion to the expence. The removal of North, or the whole detestable junto, is a matter unworthy the millions we have expended. A temporary stoppage of trade was an inconvenience, which would have sufficiently balanced the repeal of all the acts complained of, had such repeals been obtained, but if the whole Continent must take up arms, if every man must be a soldier, 'tis scarcely worth our while to fight against a contemptible ministry only. Dearly, dearly do we pay for the repeal of the acts, if that is all we fight for; for, in a just estimation 'tis as great a folly to pay a Bunker-hill price for law as for land. As I have always considered the independancy of this continent, as an event which sooner or later must arrive, so from the late rapid progress of the Continent to maturity, the event cannot be far off. Wherefore, on the breaking out of hostilities, it was not worth the while to have disputed a matter which time would have finally redressed, unless we meant to be in earnest: otherwise it is like wasting an estate on a suit at law, to regulate the trespasses of a tenant whose lease is just expiring. No man was a warmer wisher for a reconciliation than myself, before the fatal nineteenth of April, 1775, but the moment the event of that day was made known, I rejected the hardened, sullen-tempered Pharaoh of England for ever; and disdain the wretch, that with the pretended title of FATHER OF HIS PEOPLE can unfeelingly hear of their slaughter, and composedly sleep with their blood upon his soul.

But admitting that matters were now made up, what would be the event? I answer, the ruin of the Continent. And that for several reasons.

First. The powers of governing still remaining in the hands of the King, he will have a negative over the whole legislation of this Continent. And as he hath shown himself such an inveterate enemy to liberty, and discovered such a thirst for arbitrary power, is he, or is he not, a proper person to say to these colonies, *You shall make no laws but what I please?* And is there any inhabitant of America so ignorant as not to know, that according to what is called the *present constitution*, this Continent can make no laws but what the king gives leave to; and is there any man so unwise as not to see, that (considering what has happened) he will suffer no law to be made here but such as suits *his* purpose? We may be as effectually enslaved by the want of laws in America, as by sub-

mitting to laws made for us in England. After matters are made up (as it is called) can there be any doubt, but the whole power of the crown will be exerted to keep this continent as low and humble as possible? Instead of going forward we shall go backward, or be perpetually quarreling, or ridiculously petitioning. We are already greater than the King wishes us to be, and will he not hereafter endeavor to make us less? To bring the matter to one point, Is the power who is jealous of our prosperity, a proper power to govern us? Whoever says *No*, to this question, is an Independent, for independency means no more than this, whether we shall make our own laws, or, whether the King, the greatest enemy this continent hath, or can have, shall tell us *there shall be no laws but such as I like*.

But the King, you will say, has a negative in England; the people there can make no laws without his consent. In point of right and good order, it is something very ridiculous that a youth of twenty-one (which hath often happened) shall say to several millions of people older and wiser than himself, "I forbid this or that act of yours to be law." But in this place I decline this sort of reply, though I will never cease to expose the absurdity of it, and only answer that England being the King's residence, and America not so, makes quite another case. The King's negative here is ten times more dangerous and fatal than it can be in England; for there he will scarcely refuse his consent to a bill for putting England into as strong a state of defense as possible, and in America he would never suffer such a bill to be passed.

America is only a secondary object in the system of British politics. England consults the good of this country no further than it answers her own purpose. Wherefore, her own interest leads her to suppress the growth of ours in every case which doth not promote her advantage, or in the least interferes with it. A pretty state we should soon be in under such a second hand government, considering what has happened! Men do not change from enemies to friends by the alteration of a name: And in order to show that reconciliation now is a dangerous doctrine, I affirm, *that it would be policy in the King at this time to repeal the acts, for the sake of reinstating himself in the government of the provinces; In order that HE MAY ACCOMPLISH BY CRAFT AND*

SUBTLETY, IN THE LONG RUN, WHAT HE CANNOT DO BY FORCE AND VIOLENCE IN THE SHORT ONE. Reconciliation and ruin are nearly related.

Secondly. That as even the best terms which we can expect to obtain can amount to no more than a temporary expedient, or a kind of government by guardianship, which can last no longer than till the Colonies come of age, so the general face and state of things in the interim will be unsettled and unpromising. Emigrants of property will not choose to come to a country whose form of government hangs but by a thread, and who is every day tottering on the brink of commotion and disturbance; and numbers of the present inhabitants would lay hold of the interval to dispose of their effects, and quit the Continent.

But the most powerful of all arguments is, that nothing but independance, *i. e.* a Continental form of government, can keep the peace of the Continent and preserve it inviolate from civil wars. I dread the event of a reconciliation with Britain now, as it is more than probable that it will be followed by a revolt some where or other, the consequences of which may be far more fatal than all the malice of Britain.

Thousands are already ruined by British barbarity; (thousands more will probably suffer the same fate.) Those men have other feelings than us who have nothing suffered. All they now possess is liberty; what they before enjoyed is sacrificed to its service, and having nothing more to lose they disdain submission. Besides, the general temper of the Colonies, towards a British government will be like that of a youth who is nearly out of his time; they will care very little about her: And a government which cannot preserve the peace is no government at all, and in that case we pay our money for nothing; and pray what is it that Britain can do, whose power will be wholly on paper, should a civil tumult break out the very day after reconciliation? I have heard some men say, many of whom I believe spoke without thinking, that they dreaded an independance, fearing that it would produce civil wars: It is but seldom that our first thoughts are truly correct, and that is the case here; for there is ten times more to dread from a patched up connection than from independance. I make the sufferer's case my own, and I protest, that were I driven from house and home, my property de-

stroyed, and my circumstances ruined, that as a man, sensible of injuries, I could never relish the doctrine of reconciliation, or consider myself bound thereby.

The Colonies have manifested such a spirit of good order and obedience to Continental government, as is sufficient to make every reasonable person easy and happy on that head. No man can assign the least pretence for his fears, on any other grounds, than such as are truly childish and ridiculous, viz., that one colony will be striving for superiority over another.

Where there are no distinctions there can be no superiority; perfect equality affords no temptation. The Republics of Europe are all (and we may say always) in peace. Holland and Switzerland are without wars, foreign or domestic. Monarchical governments, it is true, are never long at rest: the crown itself is a temptation to enterprising ruffians at home; and that degree of pride and insolence ever attendant on regal authority, swells into a rupture with foreign powers in instances where a republican government, by being formed on more natural principles, would negotiate the mistake. - - -

from THE AGE OF REASON,
Part I (1793; 1794)

CHAPTER I. THE AUTHOR'S PROFESSION
OF FAITH

It has been my intention, for several years past, to publish my thoughts upon Religion. I am well aware of the difficulties that attend the subject; and, from that consideration, had reserved it to a more advanced period of life. I had intended it to be the last offering I should make to my fellow-citizens of all nations; and that at a time when the purity of the motive that induced me to it could not admit of a question, even by those who might disapprove the work.

The circumstance that has now taken place in France, of the total abolition of the whole national order of priesthood and of everything appertaining to compulsive systems of religion, and compulsive articles of faith, has not only precipitated my intention, but rendered a work of this kind exceedingly necessary; lest, in the general wreck of superstition, of false systems of

government, and false theology, we lose sight of morality, of humanity, and of the theology that is true.

As several of my colleagues, and others of my fellow-citizens of France, have given me the example of making their voluntary and individual profession of faith, I also will make mine, and I do this with all that sincerity and frankness with which the mind of man communicates with itself.

I believe in one God, and no more, and I hope for happiness beyond this life.

I believe in the equality of man, and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavoring to make our fellow-creatures happy.

But, lest it should be supposed that I believe many other things in addition to these, I shall, in the progress of this work, declare the things I do not believe, and my reasons for not believing them.

I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish church, by the Roman church, by the Greek church, by the Turkish church, by the Protestant church, nor by any church that I know of. My own mind is my own church.

All national institutions of churches—whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish—appear to me no other than human inventions set up to terrify and enslave mankind and monopolize power and profit.

I do not mean by this declaration to condemn those who believe otherwise. They have the same right to their belief as I have to mine. But it is necessary to the happiness of man, that he be mentally faithful to himself. Infidelity does not consist in believing, or in disbelieving; it consists in professing to believe what he does not believe.

It is impossible to calculate the moral mischief, if I may so express it, that mental lying has produced in society. When a man has so far corrupted and prostituted the chastity of his mind, as to subscribe his professional belief to things he does not believe, he has prepared himself for the commission of every other crime. He takes up the trade of a priest for the sake of gain, and, in order to *qualify* himself for that trade, he begins with a perjury. Can we conceive anything more destructive to morality than this?

Soon after I had published the pamphlet, COMMON SENSE, in America, I saw the exceeding

probability that a Revolution in the System of Government would be followed by a revolution in the system of religion. The adulterous connection of church and state, wherever it had taken place, whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish, had so effectually prohibited, by pains and penalties, every discussion upon established creeds, and upon first principles of religion, that until the system of government should be changed those subjects could not be brought fairly and openly before the world; but that whenever this should be done, a revolution in the system of religion would follow. Human inventions and priest-craft would be detected, and man would return to the pure, unmixed, and unadulterated belief of one God, and no more. - - -

CHAPTER XIII. COMPARISON OF CHRISTIANITY WITH THE RELIGIOUS IDEAS INSPIRED BY NATURE

- - - My father being of the Quaker profession, it was my good fortune to have an exceeding good moral education, and a tolerable stock of useful learning. Though I went to the grammar school, I did not learn Latin, not only because I had no inclination to learn languages, but because of the objection the Quakers have against the books in which the language is taught. But this did not prevent me from being acquainted with the subjects of all the Latin books used in the school.

The natural bent of my mind was to science. I had some turn, and I believe some talent, for poetry; but this I rather repressed than encouraged, as leading too much into the field of imagination. As soon as I was able I purchased a pair of globes, and attended the philosophical lectures of Martin and Ferguson, and became afterwards acquainted with Dr. Bevis, of the society called the Royal Society, then living in the Temple, and an excellent astronomer.

I had no disposition for what was called politics. It presented to my mind no other idea than is contained in the word Jockeyship. When, therefore, I turned my thoughts towards matters of government, I had to form a system for myself that accorded with the moral and philosophic principles in which I had been educated. I saw, or at least thought I saw, a vast scene opening itself to the world in the affairs of America; and it appeared to me that unless the Americans

changed the plan they were then pursuing with respect to the government of England and declared themselves independent, they would not only involve themselves in a multiplicity of new difficulties, but shut out the prospect that was then offering itself to mankind through their means. It was from these motives that I published the work known by the name of *Common Sense*, which is the first work I ever did publish; and so far as I can judge of myself I believe I should never have been known in the world as an author on any subject whatever, had it not been for the affairs of America. I wrote *Common Sense* the latter end of the year 1775, and published it the first of January, 1776. Independence was declared the fourth of July following.

Any person who has made observations on the state and progress of the human mind, by observing his own, cannot but have observed that there are two distinct classes of what are called Thoughts: those that we produce in ourselves by reflection and the act of thinking, and those that bolt into the mind of their own accord. I have always made it a rule to treat those voluntary visitors with civility, taking care to examine, as well as I was able, if they were worth entertaining; and it is from them I have acquired almost all the knowledge that I have. As to the learning that any person gains from school education, it serves only, like a small capital, to put him in the way of beginning learning for himself afterwards. Every person of learning is finally his own teacher, the reason of which is that principles, being of a distinct quality to circumstances, cannot be impressed upon the memory; their place of residence is the understanding, and they are never so lasting as when they begin by conception. Thus much for the introductory part.

From the time I was capable of conceiving an idea, and acting upon it by reflection, I either doubted the truth of the Christian system, or thought it to be a strange affair; I scarcely know which it was; but I well remember, when about seven or eight years of age, hearing a sermon read by a relation of mine, who was a great devotee of the church, upon the subject of what is called *Redemption by the Death of the Son of God*. After the sermon was ended I went into the garden, and as I was going down the garden steps (for I perfectly recollect the spot) I revolted at the recollection of what I had heard, and thought

to myself that it was making God Almighty act like a passionate man that killed his son when he could not revenge himself any other way; and as I was sure a man would be hanged that did such a thing, I could not see for what purpose they preached such sermons. This was not one of those kind of thoughts that had anything in it of childish levity; it was to me a serious reflection, arising from the idea that God was too good to do such an action, and also too almighty to be under any necessity of doing it. I believe in the same manner to this moment; and I moreover believe that any system of religion that has anything in it that shocks the mind of a child cannot be a true system.

It seems as if parents of the Christian profession were ashamed to tell their children anything about the principles of their religion. They sometimes instruct them in morals, and talk to them of the goodness of what they call Providence; for the Christian mythology has five deities—there is God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, the God Providence, and the Goddess Nature. But the Christian story of God the Father putting his son to death, or employing people to do it (for that is the plain language of the story), cannot be told by a parent to a child; and to tell him that it was done to make mankind happier and better is making the story still worse; as if mankind could be improved by the example of murder; and to tell him that all this is a mystery is only making an excuse for the incredibility of it.

How different is this to the pure and simple profession of Deism! The true Deist has but one Deity; and his religion consists in contemplating the power, wisdom, and benignity of the Deity in his works, and in endeavoring to imitate him in everything moral, scientific, and mechanical.

The religion that approaches the nearest of all others to the true Deism, in the moral and benign part thereof, is that professed by the Quakers; but they have contracted themselves too much by leaving the works of God out of their system. Though I reverence their philanthropy, I cannot help smiling at the conceit that if the taste of a Quaker could have been consulted at the creation, what a silent and drab-colored creation it would have been! Not a flower would have blossomed its gaities, nor a bird been permitted to sing. - - -

from AGRARIAN JUSTICE (1797)
(1795-1796)

This pamphlet was written shortly after Paine had completed the second part of *The Age of Reason* and while he was living with the James Monroes in Paris. In France there was wide discussion of what should be done with the confiscated property of the *émigrés*. One Babeuf advocated dividing up the property of all the rich. To this drastic step Paine was strongly opposed. Writing with England in mind, he advocated a tax on the landed aristocracy for the benefit of other classes. During the American Revolution Paine had thought that government was a necessary evil and that it should be kept at a minimum. Here, however, we find him anticipating Henry George and twentieth-century reformers in advocating the use of the powers of the national government in order to secure a fairer division of property and improve the lot of the common man. For Paine's economic theories, see J. Dorfman, "The Economic Philosophy of Thomas Paine," *Political Science Quarterly*, LIII, 372-386 (September, 1938).

To preserve the benefits of what is called civilized life, and to remedy at the same time the evil which it has produced, ought to be considered as one of the first objects of reformed legislation.

Whether that state that is proudly, perhaps erroneously, called civilization, has most promoted or most injured the general happiness of man, is a question that may be strongly contested. On one side, the spectator is dazzled by splendid appearances; on the other, he is shocked by extremes of wretchedness; both of which it has erected. The most affluent and the most miserable of the human race are to be found in the countries that are called civilized.

To understand what the state of society ought to be, it is necessary to have some idea of the natural and primitive state of man; such as it is at this day among the Indians of North America. There is not, in that state, any of those spectacles of human misery which poverty and want present to our eyes in all the towns and streets of Europe. Poverty, therefore, is a thing created by that which is called civilized life. It exists not in the natural state. On the other hand, the natural state is without those advantages which flow from agriculture, arts, sciences, and manufactures.

The life of an Indian is a continual holiday, compared with the poor of Europe; and, on the other hand, it appears to be abject when compared to the rich. Civilization, therefore, or that

which is so called, has operated two ways. to make one part of society more affluent, and the other more wretched, than would have been the lot of either in a natural state.

It is always possible to go from the natural to the civilized state, but it is never possible to go from the civilized to the natural state. The reason is, that man in a natural state, subsisting by hunting, requires ten times the quantity of land to range over to procure himself sustenance, than would support him in a civilized state, where the earth is cultivated. When, therefore, a country becomes populous by the additional aids of cultivation, art, and science, there is a necessity of preserving things in that state; because without it there cannot be sustenance for more, perhaps, than a tenth part of its inhabitants. The thing, therefore, now to be done is to remedy the evils and preserve the benefits that have arisen to society by passing from the natural to that which is called the civilized state.

In taking the matter upon this ground, the first principle of civilization ought to have been, and ought still to be, that the condition of every person born into the world, after a state of civilization commences, ought not be worse than if he had been born before that period. But the fact is, that the condition of millions, in every country in Europe, is far worse than if they had been born before civilization began, or had been born among the Indians of North-America at the present day. I will shew how this fact has happened.

It is a position not to be controverted that the earth, in its natural uncultivated state was, and ever would have continued to be, *the common property of the human race*. In that state every man would have been born to property. He would have been a joint life proprietor with the rest in the property of the soil, and in all its natural productions, vegetable and animal.

But the earth in its natural state, as before said, is capable of supporting but a small number of inhabitants compared with what it is capable of doing in a cultivated state. And as it is impossible to separate the improvement made by cultivation from the earth itself, upon which that improvement is made, the idea of landed property arose from that inseparable connection; but it is nevertheless true, that it is the value of the improvement only, and not the earth itself, that is individual property. Every proprietor, there-

fore, of cultivated land, owes to the community a *ground-rent* (for I know of no better term to express the idea) for the land which he holds; and it is from this ground-rent that the fund proposed in this plan is to issue.

It is deducible, as well from the nature of the thing as from all the histories transmitted to us, that the idea of landed property commenced with cultivation, and that there was no such thing as landed property before that time. It could not exist in the first state of man, that of hunters. It did not exist in the second state, that of shepherds. neither Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, nor Job, so far as the history of the Bible may be credited in probable things, were owners of land. Their property consisted, as is always enumerated, in flocks and herds, and they travelled with them from place to place. The frequent contentions at that time, about the use of a well in the dry country of Arabia, where those people lived, also shew that there was no landed property. It was not admitted that land could be claimed as property.

There could be no such thing as landed property originally. Man did not make the earth, and, though he had a natural right to *occupy* it, he had no right to *locate as his property* in perpetuity any part of it; neither did the creator of the earth open a land-office, from whence the first title-deeds should issue. Whence then, arose the idea of landed property? I answer as before, that when cultivation began the idea of landed property began with it, from the impossibility of separating the improvement made by cultivation from the earth itself, upon which that improvement was made. The value of the improvement so far exceeded the value of the natural earth, at that time, as to absorb it; till, in the end, the common right of all became confounded into the cultivated right of the individual. But there are, nevertheless, distinct species of rights, and will continue to be so long as the earth endures.

It is only by tracing things to their origin that we can gain rightful ideas of them, and it is by gaining such ideas that we discover the boundary that divides right from wrong, and teaches every man to know his own. I have entitled this tract *Agrarian Justice*, to distinguish it from *Agrarian Law*. Nothing could be more unjust than *Agrarian Law* in a country improved by cultivation; for though every man, as an inhabitant of the earth, is a joint proprietor of it in its natural

state, it does not follow that he is a joint proprietor of cultivated earth. The additional value made by cultivation, after the system was admitted, became the property of those who did it, or who inherited it from them, or who purchased it. It had originally no owner. Whilst, therefore, I advocate the right, and interest myself in the hard case of all those who have been thrown out of their natural inheritance by the introduction of the system of landed property, I equally defend the right of the possessor to the part which is his.

Cultivation is at least one of the greatest natural improvements ever made by human invention. It has given to created earth a tenfold value. But the landed monopoly that began with it has produced the greatest evil. It has dispossessed more than half the inhabitants of every nation of their natural inheritance, without providing for them, as ought to have been done, an indemnification for that loss, and has thereby created a species of poverty and wretchedness that did not exist before.

In advocating the case of the persons thus dispossessed, it is a right, and not a charity, that I am pleading for. But it is that kind of right which, being neglected at first, could not be brought forward afterwards till heaven had opened the way by a revolution in the system of government. Let us then do honour to revolutions by justice, and give currency to their principles by blessings.

Having thus in a few words, opened the merits of the case, I shall now proceed to the plan I have to propose, which is,

To create a National Fund, out of which there shall be paid to every person, when arrived at the age of twenty-one years, the sum of fifteen pounds sterling, as a compensation in part, for the loss of his or her natural inheritance, by the introduction of the system of landed property.

And also, the sum of ten pounds per annum, during life, to every person now living of the age of fifty years, and to all others as they shall arrive at that age. - - -

JONATHAN BOUCHER

1738 - 1804

One of the ablest of the Tory writers was the uncompromising Anglican clergyman, Jonathan Boucher, grandfather of the English poet Frederick Locker-Lampson. The son of a village schoolmaster in northern England, Boucher came to northern Virginia in 1759 as tutor to the sons of a planter. Ordained in 1762, he preached at various churches in Virginia and Maryland until September, 1775, when he was forced to return to England. In *The Reminiscences of an American Loyalist*, written in 1786 but not published until 1925, he quotes a characterization of himself written by the woman who later married him:

"In person, inelegant and clumsy, yet not rough and disgusting; of a dark complexion, and with large but not forbidding features. Of a thoughtful yet cheerful aspect; with a penetrating eye, and a turn of countenance that invites confidence and begets affection. Manners—often awkward, yet always interesting; perfectly untaught and unformed, comformable to no rules, yet never unpolite; incapable

of making a bow like a gentleman, yet far more incapable of thinking, speaking, or acting in a manner unbecoming a gentleman. Never knew a person of so low an origin and breeding with so high and improved a mind; a thorough gentleman as to internals and essentials, tho' often lamentably deficient in outward forms."

In addition to his preaching, Boucher conducted a boarding school for boys, one of whom was George Washington's stepson, John Parke Custis. In 1770 he became Rector of St. Anne's in Annapolis, the Maryland capital. Here he acted as ghost writer for the royal Governor and played an important part in political affairs. At first he opposed the Stamp Act, but quickly discovered that he had taken the wrong side and lined himself up with the conservatives. The self-made man, once he finds himself admitted to the class possessing privilege and power, is likely to prove a more uncompromising conservative than one to the manner born. In 1797, while Vicar of Epsom in Surrey, he published thirteen of his Maryland sermons in a book entitled *A View of the Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution*. Disturbed over the recent revolution in France, which he regarded as "one of the dreadful effects of the American revolt," he hoped that Englishmen and Americans would now profit by the warnings which had gone unheeded in the 1770's. Had Boucher been less uncompromising, he might have made converts to his doctrine, which represented extreme Toryism. His notions of government are explained in a sermon "On Civil Liberty, Passive Obedience, and Non-Resistance." "True liberty" he defined as "a liberty to do every thing that is right, and the being restrained from doing any thing that is wrong." "The word *liberty*, as meaning civil liberty," he said, "does not, I believe, occur in all the Scriptures." From the Bible he drew something like James I's view of the divine right of kings. He had no patience with the popular notions of democracy, as may be seen from the following extract from the sermon just quoted:

"This popular notion, that government was originally formed by the consent or by a compact of the people, rests on, and is supported by, another similar notion, not less popular, nor better founded. This other notion is, that the whole human race is born equal; and that no man is naturally inferior, or, in any respect, subjected to another; and that he can be made subject to another only by his own consent. The position is equally ill-founded and false both in its premises and conclusions. In hardly any sense that can be imagined is the position strictly true; but, as applied to the case under consideration, it is demonstrably not true. Man differs from man in every thing that can be supposed to lead to supremacy and subjection, *as one star differs from another star in glory*. It was the purpose of the Creator, that man should be social: but, without government, there can be no society; nor, without some relative inferiority and superiority, can there be any government. A musical instrument composed of chords, keys, or pipes, all perfectly equal in size and power, might as well be expected to produce harmony, as a society composed of members all perfectly equal to be productive of order and peace. If (according to the idea of the advocates of this chimerical scheme of equality) no man could rightfully *be compelled to come in* and be a member even of a government to be formed by a regular compact, but by his own individual consent; it clearly follows, from the same principles, that neither could he rightfully be made or compelled to submit to the ordinances of any government already formed, to which he has not individually or actually consented. On the principle of equality, neither his parents, nor even the vote of a majority of that society, (however virtuously and honour-

ably that vote might be obtained,) can have any such authority over any man Neither can it be maintained the acquiescence implies consent; because acquiescence may have been extorted from impotence or incapacity. Even an explicit consent can bind a man no longer than he chooses to be bound. The same principle of equality that exempts him from being governed without his own consent, clearly entitles him to recall and resume that consent whenever he sees fit; and he alone has a right to judge when and for what reasons it may be resumed."

See the excellent brief chapter on Boucher in V. L. Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought*, Vol. I, and "Letters of the Rev. Jonathan Boucher" in the *Maryland Historical Magazine* for 1912, 1913, and 1914. For another Tory view of American revolutionists, see the selection from Janet Schaw, given in the Appendix to this volume.

from REMINISCENCES OF
AN AMERICAN LOYALIST,
1738-1789 (1925)*
(1786)

It was proper and necessary that at least I should continue to go to church. My wife's uncle Mr. Addison's parish was supposed to be somewhat quieter than mine; and as this was the case, and my estate also lay in it, I left Queen Anne and removed to The Lodge, where I officiated as Mr. Addison's curate; having put a Mr. Harrison, brother to the gentleman of that name who was afterwards Mr. Washington's secretary, into the cure of my parish. In the usual and regular course of preaching I happened one Sunday to recommend peaceableness; on which a Mr. Lee and sundry others, supposing my sermon to be what they called a stroke at the time, rose up and left the church. This was a signal to the people to consider every sermon of mine as hostile to the views and interests of America; and accordingly I never after went into a pulpit without something very disagreeable happening. I received sundry messages and letters threatening me with the most fatal consequences if I did not (not desist from preaching at all, but) preach what should be agreeable to the friends of America. All the answer I gave to these threats was in my sermons, in which I uni-

formly and resolutely declared that I never could suffer any merely human authority to intimidate me from performing what in my conscience I believed and knew to be my duty to God and His Church. And for more than six months I preached, when I did preach, with a pair of loaded pistols lying on the cushion; having given notice that if any man, or body of men, could possibly be so lost to all sense of decency and propriety as to attempt really to do what had been long threatened, that is, to drag me out of my own pulpit, I should think myself justified before God and man in repelling violence by violence. - - -

A public fast was ordained. In America, as in the Grand Rebellion in England, much execution was done by sermons. Those persons who have read any out of the great number of Puritan sermons that were then printed as well as preached, will cease to wonder that so many people were worked up into such a state of frenzy; and I who either heard, or heard of, many similar discourses from the pulpits in America, felt the effects of them no less than they had before been felt here. My curate was but a weak brother, yet a strong Republican, i.e., as far as he knew how. The sermon he had preached on a former fast, though very silly, was still more exceptionable as contributing to blow the coals of sedition. Its silliness perhaps made it even more mischievous; for to be very popular, it is, I believe, necessary to be very like

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the bulk of the people, that is, wrong-headed, ignorant, and prone to resist authority. And I am persuaded, whenever it happens that a really sensible man becomes the idol of the people, it must be owing to his possessing a talent of letting himself down to their level. It remains to be proved, however, that ever a really sensible person did take this part; I think the contrary may be proved. As, however, Mr. Harrison's practice as well as preaching were now beginning to be exceptionable, that is, by his setting about and promoting factious Associations and subscriptions, it was thought necessary that on the approaching fast-day, which was a day of great expectation, I should make a point of appearing in my own pulpit; and the Governor waited on me on purpose to press my doing so.

On my informing Mr. Harrison that this was my intention, he told me he had prepared a sermon for the occasion. I asked him what subject he had pitched upon, and I never shall forget his reply. He proposed, he said, to preach against *absolute monarchy*. It was impossible, I said, not to commend the judiciousness of his choice; as the times and the country in which our lot had fallen so particularly called on us to put our people on their guard against a danger into which they seemed so likely to fall. The fact was, I fancy, he had found such a sermon in Hoadly, and having transcribed it, shewed it to the Committee [of Safety], by whom it was approved, as any and every thing was and would have been, however loose and weak, that but seemed to be against power and for liberty.

Mr. Addison, the Governor, and all the most judicious friends I had, looked over my sermon, and thought I had softened it down so, as that it might do good, and at least could not possibly give offence. In this and everything else that I now wrote, all that I could dare to hope to effect, was the restraining the body of the people from taking any active part; and the jet of my arguments was that in taking a part they could not be sure they were right and doing good; and so their truest wisdom as well as duty in so difficult a conjecture was, as the Prophet advised them, to *sit still*. And sadly as things went against loyalty and loyal men, I have the comfort to reflect that some good was done by my efforts in their favour. I had some credit and character with my brethren of the clergy, many of whom were thus restrained within the bounds of duty. And as a

proof that many of the people were so restrained, I may mention that when members for the Provincial Congress were to be chosen, as the measure was quite novel and altogether unknown to our laws, I exhorted my people to abstain from it, and not one of them attended. Out of the whole county there were but thirteen electors; and in Annapolis there were but four. And it is a certain fact, of the truth of which I at least am thoroughly convinced, that nine out of ten of the people of America, properly so called, were adverse to the revolt. But how shall an historian prove so extraordinary a fact, or expect to gain credit if he should prove it?

When the fast-day came I set off, accompanied by Mr. Walter Dulany, since made a major in a Provincial Loyal Regiment, and was at my church at least a quarter of an hour before the usual time of beginning service. But behold, Mr. Harrison was in the desk, and was expected also, as I was soon told, to preach. This was not agreeable: but of how little significance was this compared to what I next saw, viz., my church filled with not less than 200 armed men, under the command of Mr. Osborne Sprigg, who soon let me know I was not to preach. I returned for answer that the pulpit was my own, and as such I would use it; and that there was but one way by which they could keep me out of it, and that was by taking away my life. In church I managed to place myself so as to have the command of the pulpit, and told my curate at his peril not to attempt to dispossess me. Sundry messages were sent, and applications made to me, to relinquish my purpose; but as I knew it was my duty, and thought also that it was my interest, not to relinquish it, I persisted. And so at the proper time, with my sermon in one hand and a loaded pistol in the other, like Nehemiah, I prepared to ascend the steps of the pulpit, when behold, one of my friends (Mr. David Crawford of Upper Marlborough) having got behind me, threw his arms around mine and held me fast. He assured me on his honour he had both seen and heard the most positive orders given to twenty men picked out for the purpose to fire on me the moment I got into the pulpit, which therefore he never would permit me to do, unless I was stronger than he and two or three others who stood close to him. I entreated him and them to go with me into the pulpit, as my life seemed

to myself to depend on my not suffering these outrageous people to carry their point; and I suppose we should all be safe while we were all together, for Mr. Crawford and those with him were rather against than for me in politics. In all these cases I argued that once to flinch was for ever to invite danger, and that as I could never be out of the reach of such men till I was out of the country, my only policy was, if possible, to intimidate them, as in some degree I had hitherto done. My well-wishers however prevailed—by force rather than by persuasion, and when I was down it is horrid to recollect what a scene of confusion ensued. A large party insisted I was right in claiming and using my own pulpit; but Sprigg and his company were now grown more violent, and soon managed so as to surround me, and to exclude every moderate man. Seeing myself thus circumstanced, it occurred to me that things seemed now indeed to be growing alarming, and that there was but one way to save my life. This was by seizing Sprigg, as I immediately did, by the collar, and with my cocked pistol in the other hand, assuring him that if any violence was offered to me I would instantly blow his brains out, as I most certainly would have done. I then told him that if he pleased he might conduct me to my horse, and I would leave them. This he did, and we marched together upwards of a hundred yards, I with one hand fastened in his collar and a pistol in the other, guarded by his whole company, whom he had the meanness to order to play on their drums the Rogues' March all the way we went, which they did. All farther that

I could them do was to declare, as loud as I could speak, that he had now proved himself to be a complete coward and scoundrel.

Thus ended this dreadful day, which was a Thursday. On the Sunday following I again went to the same church, was again opposed, though more feebly than before, owing to an idea that I never would think of making another attempt. I preached the same sermon I should have preached on the Thursday, with some comments on the transactions of that day. After sermon, notice having been spread of my being at Church, a larger body assembled, and I found myself again surrounded and hustled. But placing my back against a pillar of the church, and being a little raised, I again began to bawl and to harangue, and again got off; so that this affray ended in a war of words.

These attacks, however, now became so frequent and so furious, and the time, moreover, was coming on fast when if I did not associate, and take the oaths against legal government, I should certainly be proscribed, and, what seemed still worse, not have it in my power to get out of their clutches; for on the 10th of September all farther intercourse with Great Britain was to be stopped; so that I now began to have serious thoughts of making my retreat to England. It was far too plain that such a step could not but be in a manner ruinous to all my interests in America, which were then all the interests I had in the world: but it was alas! still plainer that to stay would too probably be equally fatal to my property and my life, and undoubtedly to my peace. ---

PATRICK HENRY

1736 - 1799

*Henry, the forest-born Demosthenes,
Whose thunder shook the Philip of the seas.*

—BYRON, "The Age of Bronze."

SPEECH IN THE VIRGINIA CONVENTION OF DELEGATES, MARCH 23, 1775

from WILLIAM WIRT'S
*SKETCHES OF THE LIFE OF PATRICK
HENRY*
(1817)

The only version of this famous speech is found in William Wirt's *Sketches of the Life of Patrick Henry* (1817). Wirt, who had not known Henry, attempted to reconstruct the speech from the accounts given him by St. George Tucker, Judge John Tyler, Thomas Jefferson, and others who had heard it. Wirt did not pretend to give the entire speech verbatim as Henry delivered it. His informants naturally remembered only the high points of what must have been a fairly long speech. Wirt has summarized most of it in what students of Julius Caesar's *Commentaries* will recall as indirect discourse. His use of quotation marks is, however, somewhat indiscriminate. In Wirt's version the speech has a sustained literary quality, a conciseness, and a poetic elevation which Henry's reported speeches seldom have. Some of the phrasing is presumably that of Wirt, who was himself a notable orator; but he did not, as some have thought, invent the whole speech after the fashion of ancient historians. The best discussion of the subject is found in Louis A. Mallory's chapter on Henry in W. N. Brigrance (ed.), *A History and Criticism of American Public Address* (1943). In reprinting the speech, many anthologists have used the first person throughout, thus giving the misleading impression that the entire speech survives. The following selection from Wirt's biography places the

speech in its proper setting in a memorable debate which followed Henry's motion that "the colony be put immediately into a state of defence."

The alarm which such a proposition must have given to those who had contemplated no resistance of a character more serious than petition, non-importation, and passive fortitude, and who still hung with suppliant tenderness on the skirts of Britain, will be readily conceived by the reflecting reader. The shock was painful. It was almost general. The resolutions were opposed as not only rash in policy, but as harsh and well nigh impious in point of feeling. Some of the warmest patriots of the convention opposed them. Richard Bland, Benjamin Harrison, and Edmund Pendleton, who had so lately drunk of the fountain of patriotism in the continental congress, and Robert S. Nicholas, one of the best as well as ablest men and patriots in the state, resisted them with all their influence and abilities.

They urged the late gracious reception of the congressional petition by the throne. They insisted that national comity, and much more filial respect, demanded the exercise of a more dignified patience. That the sympathies of the parent country were now on our side. That the friends of American liberty in parliament were still with us, and had, as yet, had no cause to blush for our indiscretion. That the manufacturing interests of Great Britain, already smarting under the effects of our non-importation, co-operated powerfully towards our relief. That the sovereign himself had relented, and

showed that he looked upon our sufferings with an eye of pity. "Was this a moment," they asked, "to disgust our friends, to extinguish all the conspiring sympathies which were working in our favour, to turn their friendship into hatred, their pity into revenge? And what was there, they asked, in the situation of the colony, to tempt us to this? Were we a great military people? Were we ready for war? Where were our stores—where were our arms—where our soldiers—where our generals—where our money, the sinews of war? They were no where to be found. In truth, we were poor—we were naked—we were defenceless. And yet we talk of assuming the front of war! of assuming it, too, against a nation, one of the most formidable in the world! A nation ready and armed at all points! Her navies riding triumphant in every sea; her armies never marching but to certain victory! What was to be the issue of the struggle we were called upon to court? What *could* be the issue, in the comparative circumstances of the two countries, but to yield up *this country* an easy prey to Great Britain, and to convert the illegitimate right which the British parliament now claimed, into a firm and indubitable right, *by conquest*? The measure might be brave; but it was the bravery of madmen. It had no pretension to the character of prudence, and as little to the grace of genuine courage. It would be time enough to resort to measures of *despair*, when every well founded *hope* had entirely vanished."

To this strong view of the subject, supported as it was by the stubborn fact of the well known helpless condition of the colony, the opponents of those resolutions superadded every topic of persuasion which belonged to the cause.

"The strength and lustre which we derived from our connexion with Great Britain—the domestic comforts which we had drawn from the same source, and whose value we were now able to estimate by their loss—that ray of reconciliation which was dawning upon us from the east, and which promised so fair and happy a day.—with this they contrasted the clouds and storms which the measure now proposed was so well calculated to raise—and in which we should not have even the poor consolation of being pitied by the world, since we should have so needlessly and rashly drawn them upon ourselves."

These arguments and topics of persuasion were so well justified by the appearance of things, and were moreover so entirely in unison with

that love of ease and quiet which is natural to man, and that disposition to hope for happier times, even under the most forbidding circumstances, that an ordinary man, in Mr. Henry's situation, would have been glad to compound with the displeasure of the house, by being permitted to withdraw his resolutions in silence.

Not so, Mr. Henry. His was a spirit to raise the whirlwind, as well as to ride in and direct it. His was that comprehensive view, that unerring prescience, that perfect command over the actions of men, which qualified him not merely to guide, but almost to create the destinies of nations.

He rose at this time with a majesty unusual to him in an exordium, and with all that self-possession by which he was so invariably distinguished. "No man," he said, "thought more highly than he did of the patriotism, as well as abilities, of the very worthy gentlemen who had just addressed the house. But different men often saw the same subject in different lights; and, therefore, he hoped it would not be thought disrespectful to those gentlemen, if, entertaining as he did, opinions of a character very opposite to theirs, he should speak forth *his* sentiments freely, and without reserve. This," he said, "was no time for ceremony. The question before the house was one of awful moment to this country. For his own part, he considered it as nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery. And in proportion to the magnitude of the subject, ought to be the freedom of the debate. It was only in this way that they could hope to arrive at truth, and fulfill the great responsibility which they held to God and their country. Should he keep back his opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offence, he should consider himself as guilty of treason towards his country, and of an act of disloyalty toward the majesty of Heaven, which he revered above all earthly kings."

"Mr. President," said he, "it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth—and listen to the song of that syren, till she transforms us into beasts. Is this," he asked, "the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Were we disposed to be of the number of those, who having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For his part, whatever anguish of spirit it might cost, *he* was

willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it."

"He had," he said, "but one lamp by which his feet were guided; and that was the lamp of experience. He knew of no way of judging of the future but by the past. And judging by the past, he wished to know what there had been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years to justify those hopes with which gentlemen had been pleased to solace themselves and the house? Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir; it will prove a snare to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition comports with those warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled, that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the implements of war and subjugation—the last arguments to which kings resort. I ask gentlemen, sir, what means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy in this quarter of the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us: they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains, which the British ministry have been so long forging. And what have we to oppose to them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we any thing new to offer upon the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable: but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we find, which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves longer. Sir, we have done every thing that could be done, to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned—we have remonstrated—we have supplicated—we have prostrated ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned, with contempt, from the foot of the

throne. In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. *There is no longer any room for hope.* If we wish to be free—if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending—if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon, until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained—we must fight!—I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts, is all that is left us!"¹

"They tell us, sir," continued Mr. Henry, "that we are weak—unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak, if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations; and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat, but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged. Their clanking may be heard on the

¹ "Imagine to yourself," says my correspondent, (judge [St. George] Tucker,) "this sentence delivered with all the calm dignity of Cato of Utica—imagine to yourself the Roman senate, assembled in the capitol, when it was entered by the profane Gauls, who, at first, were awed by their presence, as if they had entered an assembly of the gods!—imagine that you heard that Cato addressing such a senate—imagine that you saw the hand-writing on the wall of Belshazzar's palace—imagine you heard a voice as from heaven uttering the words, '*We must fight*,' as the doom of fate, and you may have some idea of the speaker, the assembly to whom he addressed himself, and the auditory, of which I was one." (Wirt's note.)

plains of Boston! The war is inevitable—and let it come! ! I repeat it, sir, let it come! ! !

“It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, peace, peace—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God!—I know not what course others may take; but as for me,” cried he, with both his arms extended aloft, his brows knit, every feature marked with the resolute purpose of his soul, and his voice swelled to its

boldest note of exclamation—“give me liberty, or give me death!”

He took his seat. No murmur of applause was heard. The effect was too deep. After the trance of a moment, several members started from their seats. The cry, “to arms,” seemed to quiver on every lip, and gleam from every eye! Richard H. Lee arose and supported Mr. Henry, with his usual spirit and elegance. But his melody was lost amidst the agitations of that ocean, which the master spirit of the storm had lifted up on high. That supernatural voice still sounded in their ears, and shivered along their arteries. They heard, in every pause, the cry of liberty or death. They became impatient of speech—their souls were on fire for action.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

1743 - 1826

“I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man.”

—THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Jefferson was more the man of letters than any of his great contemporaries except Franklin. He was an indefatigable student of many things, and his intellectual curiosity was insatiable. He is remembered mainly as the author of the Declaration of Independence, but he wrote thousands of letters, some of which have not even yet been printed. His mind was more fertile in ideas than that of any of his contemporaries, again excepting Franklin. He was the best American architect of his time. He was an early advocate of the study of Anglo-Saxon. One could go on indefinitely listing the things that at one time or another interested Jefferson. With the possible exception of Alexander Hamilton, he has influenced the development of American political thought more than any other man. The vitality of his political philosophy is nowhere better seen than in the late V. L. Parrington's *Main Currents in American Thought*, which is mainly a study of what later American writers have thought of Jefferson's central ideas.

The memorable inscription which Jefferson wrote out for his tombstone at Monticello contains no mention of the fact that he was President of the United States: “Here was buried Thomas Jefferson, author of The Declaration of Independence, of the statute of Virginia for religious freedom, and father of the University of Virginia. Born April 2d, 1743 O.S. Died [July 4, 1826].”

The best life of Jefferson is probably Gilbert Chinard's *Thomas Jefferson: The Apostle of Americanism* (1929). Paul Leicester Ford's *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson* (10 vols., 1892-1894) is excellent. The text of the fullest edition, edited by A. L. Bergh (20 vols., 1903), is less dependable. Princeton University, under the general editorship of Julian Boyd, is preparing what will eventually be the standard edition. Of the numerous books of selections from Jefferson, two of the best are those by Adrienne Koch and William Peden in the Modern Library (1944) and F. C. Prescott's *Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson* (1934) in the American Writers Series. Among the many special studies are Adrienne Koch, *The Philosophy of Thomas Jefferson* (1943), Carl Becker, *The Declaration of Independence* (1922, 1924), J. P. Foley, *The Jefferson Cyclopedia* (1900), R. J. Honeywell, *The Educational Work of Thomas Jefferson* (1931), S. F. Kimball, *Thomas Jefferson, Architect* (1916), Paul Wiltstach, *Jefferson and Monticello* (1926), and Eleanor D. Berman, *Thomas Jefferson among the Arts* (1948).

THE UNANIMOUS DECLARATION OF THE THIRTEEN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

(1776)

On June 7, 1776, Richard Henry Lee on behalf of the Virginia delegation submitted to the Continental Congress three resolutions, the first of which (adopted July 2) declared that "these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved." On June 11 the Congress appointed a committee—Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston—to "prepare a declaration to the effect of the said first resolution"; in other words, to proclaim to the world the reasons which had led to the adoption of Lee's resolution. The youthful Jefferson, who in the words of Adams had even then "a reputation for literature, science, and a happy talent for composition," was asked to draft the famous document. The committee made certain changes in Jefferson's draft and the Congress made others. These in the main were improvements, but neither Jefferson nor Adams was pleased when the Congress deleted a passage condemning the slave trade.

The Declaration has often been criticized as unoriginal in its ideas. The important thing, however, as Jefferson long afterwards wrote to Lee, was "not to find out new principles, or new arguments, never before thought of . . . but to place before mankind the common sense of the subject, in terms so plain

and firm as to command their assent . . . it was intended to be an expression of the American mind." The major portion of the Declaration is an indictment of the King, made forceful by the cumulative iteration of the phrase "He has . . ." The British Parliament is only indirectly mentioned, for Americans did not now acknowledge Parliament's right to interfere in American affairs. In the theory of British-Colonial relations implied in the document the colonies owed allegiance only to the King. There is no exposition of the natural-rights philosophy which underlies the Declaration. This is suggested by the following passage from John Locke's treatise *Of Civil Government*: "The state of nature has a law to govern it, which obliges every one and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind, who will but consult it, that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions." Many phrases in the Declaration exemplify what Adams called Jefferson's "peculiar felicity of expression." The writing throughout is marked by elevation, power, and the absence of declamation. Among various detailed studies perhaps the best are to be found in: Carl Becker, *The Declaration of Independence* (1922, 1942); Gilbert Chinard, *Thomas Jefferson* (1929); and J. H. Hazelton, *The Declaration of Independence* (1906). See also Julian Boyd, *The Declaration of Independence: The Evolution of the Text as Shown in Facsimiles of Various Drafts* (1943, 1945). The parchment copy signed by the members of the Congress consists of two long paragraphs. The editor has here followed instead the paragraphing of earlier versions which better represent Jefferson's intentions and facilitate reading and study of the document.

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands, which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.—That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.—Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the ac-

commodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the meantime exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners, refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies without the consent of our legislature.

He has affected to render the military independent of and superior to the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation: for quartering large bodies of armed troops among us; for protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these States; for cutting off our trade with all parts of the world; for imposing taxes on us without our consent; for depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury; for transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offenses; for abolishing the free

system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies; for taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments; for suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burned our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow citizens taken captive on the high seas to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.¹

¹ The following paragraph, which in Jefferson's draft came at this point, was struck out by the Congress:

"He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people, who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of *infidel* powers, is the warfare of the *Christian* king of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where MEN should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which *he* has deprived them, by murdering the people upon whom *he* also obtruded them, thus paying off former crimes committed against the *liberties* of one people with crimes which he urges them to commit against the *lives* of another."

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms: our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in attention to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by authority of the good people of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS

(1801; 1801)

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS:

Called upon to undertake the duties of the first executive office of our country, I avail myself of the presence of that portion of my fellow-citizens which is here assembled, to express my

grateful thanks for the favor with which they have been pleased to look towards me, to declare a sincere consciousness that the task is above my talents, and that I approach it with those anxious and awful presentiments which the greatness of the charge and the weakness of my powers so justly inspire. A rising nation spread over a wide and fruitful land, traversing all the seas with the rich productions of their industry, engaged in commerce with nations who feel power and forget right, advancing rapidly to destinies beyond the reach of mortal eye; when I contemplate these transcendent objects, and see the honor, the happiness, and the hopes of this beloved country committed to the issue and the auspices of this day, I shrink from the contemplation, and humble myself before the magnitude of the undertaking.

Utterly, indeed, should I despair, did not the presence of many whom I here see remind me that in the other high authorities provided by our Constitution I shall find resources of wisdom, of virtue, and of zeal on which to rely under all difficulties. To you then, gentlemen, who are charged with the sovereign functions of legislation, and to those associated with you, I look with encouragement for that guidance and support which may enable us to steer with safety the vessel in which we are all embarked, amidst the conflicting elements of a troubled sea.

During the contest of opinion through which we have passed, the animation of discussions and of exertions has sometimes worn an aspect which might impose on strangers unused to think freely and to speak and to write what they think. But this being now decided by the voice of the nation, announced according to the rules of the Constitution, all will, of course, arrange themselves under the will of the law, and unite in common efforts for the common good. All too will bear in mind this sacred principle, that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will, to be rightful, must be reasonable; that the minority possess their equal rights, which equal laws must protect, and to violate would be oppression. Let us then, fellow-citizens, unite with one heart and one mind; let us restore to social intercourse that harmony and affection without which liberty, and even life itself, are but dreary things. And let us reflect that having banished from our land that religious intolerance under which mankind so long bled and suffered, we have yet gained little if we coun-

tenance a political intolerance as despotic, as wicked, and capable of as bitter and bloody persecutions. During the throes and convulsions of the ancient world, during the agonizing spasms of infuriated man, seeking through blood and slaughter his long-lost liberty, it was not wonderful that the agitation of the billows should reach even this distant and peaceful shore; that this should be more felt and feared by some and less by others; and should divide opinions as to measures of safety. But every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. We have called by different names brethren of the same principle. We are all Republicans; we are all Federalists. If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union, or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it. I know indeed, that some honest men have feared that a republican government cannot be strong; that this Government is not strong enough. But would the honest patriot, in the full tide of successful experiment, abandon a government which has so far kept us free and firm, on the theoretic and visionary fear that this Government, the world's best hope, may by possibility want energy to preserve itself? I trust not. I believe this, on the contrary, the strongest Government on earth. I believe it the only one where every man, at the call of the law would fly to the standard of the law; would meet invasions of the public order as his own personal concern. Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he, then, be trusted with the government of others? Or have we found angels in the form of kings to govern him? Let history answer this question.

Let us then, pursue with courage and confidence our own federal and republican principles, our attachment to union and representative government. Kindly separated by nature and a wide ocean from the exterminating havoc of one quarter of the globe; too high-minded to endure the degradations of the others; possessing a chosen country, with room enough for our descendants to the hundredth and thousandth generation; entertaining a due sense of our equal right to the use of our own faculties, to the acquisitions of our own industry, to honor and confidence from our fellow-citizens, resulting not from birth, but from our actions and their sense

of them; enlightened by a benign religion, professed indeed and practiced in various forms yet all of them inculcating honesty, truth, temperance, gratitude, and the love of man, acknowledging and adoring an overruling Providence, which by all its dispensations proves that it delights in the happiness of man here and his greater happiness hereafter: with all these blessings, what more is necessary to make us a happy and a prosperous people? Still one thing more, fellow-citizens—a wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government; and this is necessary to close the circle of our felicities.

About to enter, fellow-citizens, on the exercise of duties which comprehend everything dear and valuable to you, it is proper you should understand what I deem the essential principle of this government, and consequently those which ought to shape its administration. I will compress them in the narrowest compass they will bear, stating the general principle but not all its limitations. Equal and exact justice to all men of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political; peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none; the support of the state governments in all their rights, as the most competent administrations for our domestic concerns, and the surest bulwarks against anti-republican tendencies; the preservation of the general government in its whole constitutional vigor, as the sheet-anchor of our peace at home and safety abroad; a jealous care of the right of election by the people; a mild and safe corrective of abuses which are lopped by the sword of revolution, where peaceable remedies are unprovided; absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority, the vital principle of republics, from which is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism; a well-disciplined militia, our best reliance in peace and for the first moments of war, till regulars may relieve them; the supremacy of the civil over the military authority—economy in the public expense, that labor may be lightly burdened; the honest payment of our debts, and sacred preservation of the public faith; encouragement of agriculture, and of com-

merce as its handmaid, the diffusion of information and arraignment of all abuses at the bar of the public reason; freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and freedom of person, under the protection of the habeas corpus, and trial by juries impartially selected. These principles form the bright constellation which has gone before us, and guided our steps through an age of revolution and reformation. The wisdom of our sages and blood of our heroes have been devoted to their attainment, they should be the creed of our political faith; the text of civic instruction; the touchstone by which to try the services of those we trust; and should we wander from them in moments of error or alarm, let us hasten to retrace our steps and to regain the road which alone leads to peace, liberty, and safety.

I repair then, fellow-citizens, to the post which you have assigned me. With experience enough in subordinate stations to know the difficulties of this, the greatest of all, I have learned to expect that it will rarely fall to the lot of imperfect man to retire from this station with the reputation and the favor which bring him into it. Without pretensions to that high confidence you reposed in our first and greatest revolutionary character, whose preëminent services had entitled him to the first place in his country's love, and had destined for him the fairest page in the volume of faithful history, I ask so much confidence only as may give firmness and effect to the legal administration of your affairs. I shall often go wrong through defect of judgment. When right, I shall often be thought wrong by those whose positions will not command a view of the whole ground. I ask your indulgence for my own errors, which will never be intentional; and your support against the errors of others who may condemn what they would not, if seen in all its parts. The approbation implied by your suffrage is a great consolation to me for the past; and my future solicitude will be to retain the good opinion of those who have bestowed it in advance, to conciliate that of others by doing them all the good in my power, and to be instrumental to the happiness and freedom of all.

Relying then on the patronage of your goodwill, I advance with obedience to the work, ready to retire from it whenever you become sensible how much better choice it is in your power to make. And may that Infinite Power which rules

the destinies of the universe lead our councils to what is best, and give them a favorable issue for your peace and prosperity.

[The Character of George Washington]

(1814)

Jefferson's notable portrait of Washington is a part of a letter written to Walter Jones, January 2, 1814. While a member of Washington's cabinet, Jefferson had felt that Washington too often took the side of his great rival, Alexander Hamilton.

- - - I think I knew General Washington intimately and thoroughly; and were I called on to delineate his character, it should be in terms like these.

His mind was great and powerful, without being of the very first order; his penetration strong, though not so acute as that of a Newton, Bacon, or Locke, and as far as he saw, no judgment was ever sounder. It was slow in operation, being little aided by invention or imagination, but sure in conclusion. Hence the common remark of his officers, of the advantage he derived from councils of war, where hearing all suggestions, he selected whatever was best; and certainly no general ever planned his battles more judiciously. But if deranged during the course of the action, if any member of his plan was dislocated by sudden circumstances, he was slow in re-adjustment. The consequence was, that he often failed in the field, and rarely against an enemy in station, as at Boston and New York. He was incapable of fear, meeting personal dangers with the calmest unconcern. Perhaps the strongest feature in his character was prudence, never acting until every circumstance, every consideration, was maturely weighed; refraining if he saw a doubt, but, when once decided, going through with his purpose, whatever obstacles opposed. His integrity was most pure, his justice the most inflexible I have ever known, no motives of interest or consanguinity, of friendship or hatred, being able to bias his decision. He was, indeed, in every sense of the words, a wise, a good, and a great man. His temper was naturally high toned; but reflection and resolution had obtained a firm and habitual ascendancy over it. If ever, however, it broke its bonds, he was most tremendous in his wrath. In his expenses he was honorable, but exact; liberal in contributions to whatever promised utility; but frowning and un-

yielding on all visionary projects, and all unworthy calls on his charity. His heart was not warm in its affections, but he exactly calculated every man's value, and gave him a solid esteem proportioned to it. His person, you know, was fine, his stature exactly what one would wish, his deportment easy, erect and noble, the best horseman of his age, and the most graceful figure that could be seen on horseback. Although in the circle of his friends, where he might be unreserved with safety, he took a free share in conversation, his colloquial talents were not above mediocrity, possessing neither copiousness of ideas, nor fluency of words. In public, when called on for a sudden opinion, he was unready, short and embarrassed. Yet he wrote readily, rather diffusely, in an easy and correct style. This he had acquired by conversation with the world, for his education was merely reading, writing, and common arithmetic, to which he added surveying at a later day. His time was employed in action chiefly, reading little, and that only in agriculture and English history. His correspondence became necessarily extensive, and, with journalizing his agricultural proceedings, occupied most of his leisure hours within doors. On the whole, his character was, in its mass, perfect, in nothing bad, in few points indifferent, and it may truly be said, that never did nature and fortune combine more perfectly to make a man great, and to place him in the same constellation with whatever worthies have merited from man an everlasting remembrance. For his was the singular destiny and merit, of leading the armies of his country successfully through an arduous war, for the establishment of its independence, of conducting its councils through the birth of a government, new in its forms and principles until it had settled down into a quiet and orderly train; and of scrupulously obeying the laws through the whole of his career, civil and military, of which the history of the world furnishes no other example.

- - - I am satisfied the great body of republicans think of him as I do. We were, indeed, dissatisfied with him on his ratification of the British treaty. But this was short lived. We knew his honesty, the wiles with which he was encompassed, and that age had already begun to relax the firmness of his purposes; and I am convinced he is more deeply seated in the love and gratitude of the republicans, than in the Pharisaical hom-

age of the federal monarchists. For he was no monarchist from preference of his judgment. The soundness of that gave him correct views of the rights of man, and his severe justice devoted him to them. He has often declared to me that he considered our new Constitution as an experiment on the practicability of republican government, and with what dose of liberty man could be trusted for his own good; that he was determined the experiment should have a fair trial, and would lose the last drop of his blood in support of it. And these declarations he repeated to me the oftener and more pointedly, because he knew my suspicions of Colonel Hamilton's views, and probably had heard from him the same declarations which I had, to wit, "that the British constitution, with its unequal representation, corruption and other existing abuses, was the most perfect government which had ever been established on earth, and that a reformation of those abuses would make it an impracticable government." I do believe that General Washington had not a firm confidence in the durability of our government. He was naturally distrustful of men, and inclined to gloomy apprehensions; and I was ever persuaded that a belief that we must at length end in something like a British constitution, had some weight in his adoption of the ceremonies of levees, birthdays, pompous

meetings with Congress, and other forms of the same character, calculated to prepare us gradually for a change which he believed possible, and to let it come on with as little shock as might be to the public mind.

These are my opinions of General Washington, which I would vouch at the judgment seat of God, having been formed on an acquaintance of thirty years. I served with him in the Virginia legislature from 1769 to the Revolutionary war, and again, a short time in Congress, until he left us to take command of the army. During the war and after it we corresponded occasionally, and in the four years of my continuance in the office of Secretary of State our intercourse was daily, confidential and cordial. After I retired from that office, great and malignant pains were taken by our federal monarchists, and not entirely without effect, to make him view me as a theorist, holding French principles of government, which would lead infallibly to licentiousness and anarchy. And to this he listened the more easily, from my known disapprobation of the British treaty. I never saw him afterwards, or these malignant insinuations should have been dissipated before his just judgment, as mists before the sun. I felt on his death, with my countrymen, that "verily a great man hath fallen this day in Israel." ---

THE JEFFERSON-ADAMS CORRESPONDENCE

The letters that he [John Adams] and Jefferson exchanged in their old age, after the bitterness of their war had lost its acridity, are among the most beautiful, profound, and gracious of human documents.

—RUPERT HUGHES, in JOHN MACY (ed.),
American Writers on American Literature (1931), p. 47

"... the great American literature of the eighteenth century," said Gamaliel Bradford, "is the correspondence of Washington, Franklin, and a dozen others." Certainly it is true

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that in this period the more literary writers suffer from comparison with those who were primarily statesmen and men of affairs. Of the letters written by the statesmen of the Revolution, the most interesting group consists of the letters exchanged between Jefferson and Adams extending from 1812 to 1826—the year in which they died on the same day, the fourth of July. Jefferson and Adams had been closely associated in the Continental Congress and in France, but in the early years of the Republic they had become leaders of rival political parties at a time when party feeling ran high and was often expressed in bitter language. Benjamin Rush was instrumental in inducing Adams and Jefferson to write again to one another. To Adams's first letter Jefferson replied on January 21, 1812: "A letter from you calls up recollections very dear to my mind. . . . No circumstances . . . have suspended for one moment my sincere esteem for you, and I now salute you with unchanged affection and respect."

There is unfortunately no complete collection of the letters which passed between Adams and Jefferson. A selection from them, edited by Paul Wiltach, was published in 1925.

JEFFERSON TO ADAMS

MONTICELLO, *June 27, 1813.*

"Ἴδαν ἐς πολὺδενδρον ἀνὴρ ὑλατόμος ἐλθὼν
παπταίνει, παρέοντος ἄδην, πόθεν ἄρξεται ἔργου.
τί πρῶτον καταλέξω; ἐπεὶ πάρα μυρία εἶπεῖν.¹

And I too, my dear Sir, like the wood-cutter of Ida, should doubt where to begin, were I to enter the forest of opinions, discussions, and contentions which have occurred in our day. I should say with Theocritus, *τί πρῶτον καταλέξω; ἐπεὶ πάρα μυρία εἶπεῖν*. But I shall not do it. The *summum bonum* with me is now truly epicurian, ease of body and tranquillity of mind; and to these I wish to consign my remaining days. Men have differed in opinion, and been divided into parties by these opinions, from the first origin of societies, and in all governments where they have been permitted freely to think and to speak. The same political parties which now agitate the United States, have existed through all time. Whether the power of the people or that of the *ἄριστοι*² should prevail, were

questions which kept the States of Greece and Rome in eternal convulsions, as they now schismatize every people whose minds and mouths are not shut up by the gag of a despot. And in fact, the terms of whig and tory belong to natural as well as to civil history. They denote the temper and constitution of mind of different individuals. To come to our own country, and to the times when you and I became first acquainted, we will remember the violent parties which agitated the old Congress, and their bitter contests. There you and I were together, and the Jays, and the Dickinsons, and other anti-independents, were arrayed against us. They cherished the monarchy of England, and we the rights of our countrymen. When our present government was in the new, passing from Confederation to Union, how bitter was the schism between the Feds and Antis! Here you and I were together again. For although for a moment, separated by the Atlantic from the scene of action, I favored the opinion that nine States should confirm the constitution, in order to secure it, and the others hold off until certain amendments, deemed favorable to freedom, should be made. I rallied in the first instant to the wiser proposition of Massachusetts, that all should confirm, and then all instruct their delegates to urge those amendments. The amend-

¹ From Theocritus, Idyll XVII, 11.9-11: "When the wood-cutter goes up to thick woody Ida, he looks about him where to begin in all that plenty (and so I); where first am I to begin my tale, for there are ten thousand things to tell?"

² Aristocrats; literally, the best.

ments were made, and all were reconciled to the government. But as soon as it was put into motion, the line of division was again drawn. We broke into parties, each wishing to give the government a different direction; the one to strengthen the most popular branch, the other the more permanent branches, and to extend their permanence. Here you and I separated for the first time, and as we had been longer than most others on the public theatre, and our names therefore were more familiar to our countrymen, the party which considered you as thinking with them, placed your name at their head; the other, for the same reason, selected mine. But neither decency nor inclination permitted us to become the advocates of ourselves, or to take part personally in the violent contests which followed. We suffered ourselves, as you so well expressed it, to be passive subjects of public discussion. And these discussions, whether relating to men, measures or opinions, were conducted by the parties with an animosity, a bitterness and an indecency which had never been exceeded. . . . The renewal of these old discussions, my friend, would be equally useless and irksome. To the volumes then written on these subjects, human ingenuity can add nothing new, and the rather, as lapse of time has obliterated many of the facts. And shall you and I, my dear Sir, at our age, like Priam of old, gird on the "*arma, diu desueta, tremantibus, ævo humeris*"?³ Shall we, at our age, become the Athletæ of party, and exhibit ourselves as gladiators in the arena of the newspapers? Nothing in the universe could induce me to it. My mind has long been fixed to bow to the judgment of the world, who will judge by my acts, and will never take counsel from me as to what that judgment shall be. If your objects and opinions have been misunderstood, if the measures and principles of others have been wrongfully imputed to you, as I believe they have been, that you should leave an explanation of them, would be an act of justice to yourself. I will add, that it has been hoped that you would leave such explanations as would place every saddle on its right horse, and replace on the shoulders of others the burdens they shifted on yours.

³ Vergil, *Aeneid*, Book II, 11.509-510: "long dis-used arms upon our shoulders trembling with age." Jefferson is not quoting the passage literally. It reads: *Arma diu senior desueta tremantibus ævo Circumdat nequiquam umeris.*

But all this, my friend, is offered, merely for your consideration and judgment, without presuming to anticipate what you alone are qualified to decide for yourself. I mean to express my own purpose only, and the reflections which have led to it. To me, then, it appears, that there have been differences of opinion and party differences, from the first establishment of governments to the present day, and on the same question which now divides our own country, that these will continue through all future time; that every one takes his side in favor of the many, or the few, according to his constitution, and the circumstances in which he is placed; that opinions, which are equally honest on both sides, should not affect personal esteem or social intercourse; that as we judge between the Claudii and the Gracchi, the Wentworths and the Hampdens of past ages, so of those among us whose names may happen to be remembered for awhile, the next generations will judge, favorably or unfavorably, according to the complexion of individual minds, and the side they shall themselves have taken; that nothing new can be added by you or me to what had been said by others, and will be said in every age in support of the conflicting opinions on government; and that wisdom and duty dictate an humble resignation to the verdict of our future peers. In doing this myself, I shall certainly not suffer moot questions to affect the sentiments of sincere friendship and respect, consecrated to you by so long a course of time, and of which I now repeat sincere assurances.

ADAMS TO JEFFERSON

QUINCY, 9 July, 1813.

Lord! Lord! what can I do with so much Greek? When I was of your age, young man, seven or eight years ago, I felt a kind of pang of affection for one of the flames of my youth, and again paid my addresses to Isocrates and Dionysius Halicarnassensis, &c., &c., &c. I collected all my lexicons and grammars, and sat down to *περί συνθέσεως ὀνομάτων*.⁴ In this way I amused myself for some time, but I found that if I looked a word to-day, in less than a week I had to look again. It was to little better purpose than writing letters on a pile of water. . . .

"The same political parties, which now agitate

⁴ "Concerning composition of nouns," the title of a treatise by Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

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the United States, have existed through all time " Precisely; and that is precisely the complaint in the preface to the first volume of my Defence.⁵ While all other sciences have advanced, that of government is at a stand; little better understood, little better practised now than three or four thousand years ago. What is the reason? I say, parties and factions will not suffer improvement to be made. As soon as one man hints at an improvement, his rival opposes it. No sooner has one party discovered or invented any amelioration of the condition of man, or the order of society than the opposite party belies it, misconstrues it, ridicules it, insults it, and persecutes it. Records are destroyed. Histories are annihilated or interpolated or prohibited; sometimes by Popes, sometimes by Emperors, sometimes by aristocratical, and sometimes by democratical assemblies, and sometimes by mobs. - - -

I recollect, near thirty years ago, to have said carelessly to you, that I wished I could find time and means to write something upon aristocracy. You seized upon the idea, and encouraged me to do it with all that friendly warmth that is natural and habitual to you. I soon began, and have been writing upon that subject ever since. I have been so unfortunate as never to be able to make myself understood. Your ἀοιστοὶ are the most difficult animals to manage of any thing in the whole theory and practice of government. They will not suffer themselves to be governed. They not only exert all their own subtilty, industry, and courage, but they employ the commonalty to knock to pieces every plan and model that the most honest architects in legislation can invent to keep them within bounds. Both patricians and plebeians are as furious as the workmen in England to demolish labor-saving machinery.

But who are these ἀοιστοὶ? Who shall judge? Who shall select these choice spirits from the rest of the congregation? Themselves? We must find out and determine who themselves are. Shall the congregation choose? Ask Xenophon. Perhaps, hereafter I may quote you Greek; too much in a hurry at present; English must suffice. Xenophon says, that the ecclesia always choose the worst men they can find, because none others will do their dirty work. This wicked motive is worse than birth or wealth. Here I want to quote Greek again, but the day before I received your letter

⁵ *A Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America. . . .*

of June 27th, I gave the book to George Washington Adams, going to the academy at Hingham. The title is 'Ἠθικὴ ποίησις,⁶ a collection of moral sentences from all the most ancient Greek poets. In one of the oldest of them I read, in Greek that I cannot repeat, a couplet, the sense of which was: "Nobility in men is worth as much as it is in horses, asses, or rams; but the meanest-blooded puppy in the world, if he gets a little money, is as good a man as the best of them." Yet birth and wealth together have prevailed over virtue and talents in all ages. The many will acknowledge no other ἀριστοὶ Your experience of this truth will not much differ from that of your old friend.

ADAMS TO JEFFERSON

QUINCY, 2 March, 1816.

I cannot be serious! I am about to write you the most frivolous letter you ever read. Would you go back to your cradle, and live over again your seventy years? I believe you would return me a New England answer, by asking me another question, "Would you live your eighty years over again?" If I am prepared to give you an explicit answer, the question involves so many considerations of metaphysics and physics, of theology and ethics, of philosophy and history, of experience and romance, of tragedy, comedy, and farce, that I would not give my opinion without writing a volume to justify it. - - -

JEFFERSON TO ADAMS

April 8, 1816.

You ask if I would agree to live my seventy or rather seventy-three years over again? To which I say, yea. I think with you, that it is a good world on the whole; that it has been framed on a principle of benevolence, and more pleasure than pain dealt out to us. There are, indeed, (who might say nay) gloomy and hypochondriac minds, inhabitants of diseased bodies, disgusted with the present, and despairing of the future; always counting that the worst will happen, because it may happen. To these I say, how much pain have cost us the evils which have never happened! My temperament is sanguine. I steer my bark with Hope in the head, leaving Fear astern. My hopes,

⁶ Ethical poetry.

indeed, sometimes fail; but not oftener than the forebodings of the gloomy. There are, I acknowledge, even in the happiest life, some terrible convulsions, heavy set-offs against the opposite page of the account. - - -

ADAMS TO JEFFERSON

QUINCY, 3 May, 1816.

Yours of April 8th has long since been received.

J. Would you agree to live your eighty years over again?

A. Aye, and *sans phrase*.⁷

J. Would you agree to live your eighty years over again forever?

A. I once heard our acquaintance, Chew, of Philadelphia, say, he should like to go back to twenty-five to all eternity. But I own my soul would start and shrink back on itself at the prospect of an endless succession of *boules de savon*,⁸ almost as much as at the certainty of annihilation. For what is human life? I can speak only for one. I have had more comfort than distress, more pleasure than pain, ten to one; nay, if you please, a hundred to one. A pretty large dose, however, of distress and pain. But, after all, what is human life? A vapor, a fog, a dew, a cloud, a blossom, a flower, a rose, a blade of grass, a glass bubble, a tale told by an idiot, a *boule de savon*, vanity of vanities, an eternal succession of which would terrify me almost as much as annihilation.

J. Would you prefer to live over again rather than accept the offer of a better life in the future?

A. Certainly not.

J. Would you live again, rather than change for the worse in a future state, for the sake of trying something new?

A. Certainly, yes.

J. Would you live over again once or forever rather than run the risk of annihilation, or a better or worse state at or after death?

A. Most certainly I would not.

J. How valiant you are!

A. Aye, at this moment and at all other moments of my life that I can recollect; but who can tell what will become of his bravery, when his

flesh and his philosophy were not sufficient to support him in his last hours? D'Alembert said, Happy are they who have courage, but I have none. Voltaire, the greatest genius of them all, behaved like the greatest coward of them all, at his death, as he had like the wisest fool of them all in his lifetime. Hume awkwardly affects to sport away all sober thoughts. Who can answer for his last feelings and reflections, especially as the priests are in possession of the custom of making the great engines of their craft, *procul este profani*.⁹

J. How shall we, how can we, estimate the value of human life?

A. I know not; I cannot weigh sensations and reflections, pleasures and pains, hopes and fears in money scales. But I can tell you how I have heard it estimated by some philosophers. One of my old friends and clients, a *mandamus* counselor against his will, a man of letters and virtues, without one vice that I ever knew or suspected, except garrulity, William Vassal, asserted to me, and strenuously maintained, that pleasure is no compensation for pain. A hundred years of the keenest delights of human life, could not atone for one hour of bilious colic that he had felt. The sublimity of this philosophy my dull genius could not reach, I was willing to state a fair account between pleasure and pain, and give credit for the balance, which I found very great in my favor. Another philosopher, who, as we say, believed nothing, ridiculed the notion of a future state. One of the company asked, "Why are you an enemy to a future state? Are you wearied of life? Do you detest existence? 'Weary of life! Detest existence!' said the philosopher, "no, I love life so well and am so attached to existence, that to be sure of immortality, I would consent to be pitched about with forks by the devils among flames of fire and brimstone to all eternity." I find no resources in my courage for this exalted philosophy. I would rather be blotted out. *Il faut trancher le mot*.¹⁰ What is there in life to attach us to it, but the hope of a future and a better? It is a cracker, a bouquet, a firework, at best.

I admire your navigation, and should like to sail with you either in your bark or in my own, alongside with yours. Hope, with her gay ensigns

⁷ Plainly.

⁸ Soap bubbles.

⁹ Stand aloof, ye profane.

¹⁰ It is necessary to speak right out.

displayed at the prow; Fear, with her hobgoblins behind the stern. Hope remains. What pleasure? I mean, take away fear, and what pain remains? Ninety-nine hundredths of the pleasures and pains of life are nothing but hopes and fears. All nations known in history or in travels have hoped, believed, and expected a future and a better state. The Maker of the universe, the cause of all things, whether we call it *fate*, or *chance*, or *God*, has inspired this hope. If it is a fraud, we shall never know it; we shall never resent the imposition, be grateful for the illusion, nor grieve for the disappointment; we shall be no more.

Credant Grimm, Diderot, Buffon, La Lande, Condorcet, D'Holbach, Frederic, Catherine, *non ego*. Arrogant as it may be, I shall take the liberty to pronounce them all *ideologians*. Yet I would not persecute a hair of their heads; the world is wide enough for them and me.

Suppose the cause of the universe should reveal to all mankind at once a certainty, that they must all die within a century, and that death is an external extinction of all living powers, of all sensation and reflection. What would be the effect? Would there be one man, woman, or child existing on this globe twenty years hence? Would every human being be a Madame Deffand, Voltaire's "*aveugle clairvoyante*,"¹¹ all her lifetime regretting her existence, bewailing that she had ever been born; grieving that she had ever been dragged without her consent into being? Who would bear the gout, the stone, the colic, for the sake of a *boule de savon*, when a pistol, a cord, a pond, a phial of laudanum, was at hand? What would men say to their Maker? Would they thank him? No; they would reproach him, they would curse him to his face.

Voilà, a sillier letter than my last! For a wonder, I have filled a sheet, and a greater wonder, I have read fifteen volumes of Grimm.¹² *Digito compesce labellum*.¹³ I hope to write you more upon this and other topics of your letter. I have read also a history of the Jesuits, in four volumes. Can you tell me the author, or any thing of this work?

¹¹ Blind seer.

¹² Friedrich Melchior Grimm (1723-1807), French critic, author of a large part of the *Correspondance littéraire* (1753-1790), containing a survey of literary activity in France.

¹³ Hold your tongue (Juvenal).

JEFFERSON TO ADAMS

MONTICELLO, 1 August, 1816.

Your two philosophical letters, of May 4th and 6th, have been too long in my *carton* of "letters to be answered." To the question, indeed, on the utility of grief, no answer remains to be given. You have exhausted the subject. I see that, with the other evils of life, it is destined to temper the cup we are to drink.

*Two urns by Jove's high throne have ever stood,
The source of evil one, and one of good;
From thence the cup of mortal man he fills,
Blessings to these, to those distributes ills;
To most he mingles both.*

Putting myself the question, would I agree to live my seventy-three years over again forever? I hesitate to say. With Chew's limitations from twenty-five to sixty, I would say yes; and I might go further back, but not come lower down. For, at the latter period, with most of us, the powers of life are sensibly on the wane, sight becomes dim, hearing dull, memory constantly enlarging its frightful blank and parting with all we have ever seen or known, spirits evaporate, bodily debility creeps on palsying every limb, and faculty after faculty quits us, and where then is life? If, in its full vigor, of good as well as evil, your friend Vassall could doubt its value, it must be purely a negative quantity when its evils alone remain. Yet I do not go into his opinion entirely. I do not agree that an age of pleasure is no compensation for a moment of pain. I think, with you, that life is a fair matter of account, and the balance often, nay generally, in its favor. It is not indeed easy, by calculation of intensity and time, to apply a common measure, or to fix the par between pleasure and pain; yet it exists, and is measurable. On the question, for example, whether to be cut for the stone? The young, with a longer prospect of years, think these overbalance the pain of the operation. Dr. Franklin, at the age of eighty, thought his residuum of life not worth that price. I should have thought with him, even taking the stone out of the scale. There is a ripeness of time for death, regarding others as well as ourselves, when it is reasonable we should drop off, and make room for another growth. When we have lived our generation out, we should not wish to encroach on another. I enjoy good health; I am happy in what is around me, yet I assure you I am ripe for leaving all, this

year, this day, this hour. If it could be doubted whether we would go back to twenty-five, how can it be whether we would go forward from seventy-three? Bodily decay is gloomy in prospect, but of all human contemplations the most abhorrent is body without mind. Perhaps, however, I might accept of time to read Grimm before I go. Fifteen volumes of anecdotes and incidents, within the compass of my own time and cognizance, written by a man of genius, of taste, of point, an acquaintance, the measure and traverses of whose mind I know, could not fail to turn the scale in favor of life during the perusal. I must write to Ticknor to add it to my catalogue, and hold on till it comes. - - -

I know nothing of the history of the Jesuits you mention in four volumes. Is it a good one? I dislike, with you, their restoration, because it marks a retrograde step from light towards darkness. We shall have our follies without doubt. Some one or more of them will always be afloat. But ours will be the follies of enthusiasm, not of bigotry, not of Jesuitism. Bigotry is the disease of ignorance, of morbid minds; enthusiasm of the free and buoyant. Education and free discussion are the antidotes of both. We are destined to be a barrier against the returns of ignorance and barbarism. Old Europe will have to lean on our shoulders, and to hobble along by our side, under the monkish trammels of priests and kings, as she can. What a colossus shall we be when the southern continent comes up to our mark! What a stand will it secure as a ralliance for the reason and freedom of the globe! I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past,—so good night! I will dream on, always fancying that Mrs. Adams and yourself are by my side marking the progress and the obliquities of ages and countries.

ADAMS TO JEFFERSON

QUINCY, 23 February, 1819.

If these letters [of Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse] and the fifteen volumes of De Grimm are to give me an idea of the amelioration of society, and government, and manners in France, I should think the age of reason had produced nothing much better than Mahometans, the Mamelukes, or the Hindoos, or the North American Indians have produced, in different parts of the world.

Festina lente,¹⁴ my friend, in all your projects of reformation. Abolish polytheism, however, in every shape, if you can, and unfrock every priest who teaches it, if you can.

JEFFERSON TO ADAMS

MONTICELLO, October 12, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—I do not write with the ease which your letter of September 18th supposes. Crippled wrists and fingers make writing slow and laborious. But while writing to you, I lose the sense of these things in the recollection of ancient times, when youth and health made happiness out of everything. I forget for a while the hoary winter of age, when we can think of nothing but how to keep ourselves warm, and how to get rid of the heavy hours until the friendly hand of death shall rid us of all at once. Against this *tedium vitæ*, however, I am fortunately mounted on a hobby, which, indeed, I should have better managed some thirty or forty years ago; but whose easy amble is still sufficient to give exercise and amusement to an octogenary rider. This is the establishment of a University, on a scale more comprehensive, and in a country more healthy and central than our old William and Mary, which these obstacles have long kept in a state of languor and inefficiency. But the tardiness with which such works proceed, may render it doubtful whether I shall live to see it go into action.

Putting aside these things, however, for the present, I write this letter as due to a friendship coeval with our government, and now attempted to be poisoned, when too late in life to be replaced by new affections. I had for some time observed in the public papers, dark hints and mysterious innuendos of a correspondence of yours with a friend, to whom you had opened your bosom without reserve, and which was to be made public by that friend or his representative. And now, it is said to be actually published. It has not yet reached us, but extracts have been given, and such as seemed most likely to draw a curtain of separation between you and myself. Were there no other motive than that of indignation against the author of this outrage on private con-

¹⁴ Make haste slowly. According to Suetonius, this was a favorite maxim of the Emperor Augustus.

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fidence, whose shaft seems to have been aimed at
 yourself more particularly, this would make it
 the duty of every honorable mind to disappoint
 that aim, by opposing to its impression a seven-
 fold shield of apathy and insensibility. With me,
 however, no such armor is needed. The circum-
 stances of the times in which we have happened
 to live, and the partiality of our friends at a par-
 ticular period, placed us in a state of apparent
 opposition, which some might suppose to be per-
 sonal also; and there might not be wanting those
 who wished to make it so, by filling our ears with
 malignant falsehoods, by dressing up hideous
 phantoms of their own creation, presenting them
 to you under my name, to me under yours, and
 endeavoring to instill into our minds things con-
 cerning each other the most destitute of truth.
 And if there had been at any time, a moment
 when we were off our guard, and in a temper
 to let the whispers of these people make us for-
 get that we had known of each other for so many
 years, and years of so much trial, yet all men who
 have attended to the workings of the human
 mind, who have seen the false colors under
 which passion sometimes dresses the actions and
 motives of others, have seen also those passions
 subsiding with time and reflection, dissipating
 like mists before the rising sun, and restoring to
 us the sight of all things in their true shape and
 colors. It would be strange indeed, if, at our
 years, we were to go back an age to hunt up
 imaginary or forgotten facts, to disturb the re-
 pose of affections so sweetening to the evening
 of our lives. Be assured, my dear Sir, that I am
 incapable of receiving the slightest impression
 from the effort now made to plant thorns on the
 pillow of age, worth and wisdom, and to sow
 tares between friends who have been such for
 near half a century. Beseeching you then, not to
 suffer your mind to be disquieted by this wicked
 attempt to poison its peace, and praying you to
 throw it by among the things which have never
 happened, I add sincere assurances of my unabated
 and constant attachment, friendship and
 respect.

JEFFERSON TO ADAMS

March 25, 1826.

My grandson, Thomas J. Randolph, the bearer
 of this letter, being on a visit to Boston, would
 think he had seen nothing were he to leave with-
 out seeing you. Although I truly sympathize with
 you in the trouble these interruptions give, yet I
 must ask for him permission to pay you his per-
 sonal respects. Like other young people, he
 wishes to be able in the winter nights of old age,
 to recount to those around him, what he has
 heard and learnt of the heroic age preceding his
 birth, and which of the Argonauts individually
 he was in time to have seen.

It was the lot of our early years to witness noth-
 ing but the dull monotony of a colonial sub-
 servience; and of our riper years, to breast the
 labors and perils of working out of it. Theirs
 are the Halcyon calms succeeding the storm
 which our Argosy had so stoutly weathered. Grat-
 ify his ambition then, by receiving his best bow,
 and my solicitude for your health, by enabling
 him to bring me a favorable account of it. Mine
 is but indifferent, but not so my friendship and
 respect for you.

ADAMS TO JEFFERSON

April 17, 1826.

Your letter of March 25th has been a cordial to
 me, and the more consoling as it was brought by
 your grandsons, Mr. Randolph and Mr. Coolidge.
 Everybody connected with you is snatched up,
 so that I cannot get any of them to dine with me.
 They are always engaged.—How happens it that
 you Virginians are all sons of Anak? We New
 Englanders are but pygmies by the side of Mr.
 Randolph; I was much gratified with Mr. Ran-
 dolph and his conversation. Your letter is one of
 the most beautiful and delightful I have ever
 received.

Public affairs go on pretty much as usual, per-
 petual chicanery and rather more personal abuse
 than there used to be; - - - My love to all your
 family and best wishes for your health.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

1732 - 1799

*Where may the wearied eye repose
When gazing on the Great;
Where neither guilty glory glows,
Nor despicable state?
Yes—one—the first—the last—the best—
The Cincinnatus of the West,
Whom envy dared not hate,
Bequeath'd the name of Washington,
To make man blush there was but one!*

—LORD BYRON, "Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte."

Washington was less the man of letters than Franklin, Jefferson, or Madison. His correspondence, however, was voluminous; and he wrote a considerable number of documents of political importance. Occasionally his letters have the power to move the modern reader, and often they make one feel the force of the writer's powerful personality. The *Farewell Address* is one of the most important documents in American political literature. While the ideas are clearly Washington's own, much of the phrasing is that of Alexander Hamilton, who helped him prepare it.

Washington has been frequently portrayed in historical novels and plays, and he is the subject of many poetical tributes. (In other parts of this anthology there are notable poems about Washington by James Russell Lowell, Philip Freneau, and Carl Sandburg.) Washington quickly became an American symbol and, for many, something of a plaster saint. Parson Weems and other biographers contributed to this development.

The English novelist, Thackeray, who admired Washington, portrayed him in *The Virginians* (1857–1859) in a way that offended many Americans, who could admit no imperfection in the national hero. While lecturing in this country, Thackeray asked the Maryland novelist, John Pendleton Kennedy, about Washington; and when Kennedy gave the traditional picture, Thackeray interrupted him somewhat testily, saying: "No, no, Kennedy, that's not what I want. Tell me, was he a fussy old gentleman in a wig? Did he take snuff and spill it down his shirt front?" Unable to get at the real Washington, Thackeray, it would seem, decided that the only way to humanize the priggish young officer was to place him in a position where he would be compelled to fight a duel with a Virginia friend.

The most notable portrait of Washington in American fiction is found in *The Spy* (1821)

of James Fenimore Cooper. Among the better later portraits are those found in Paul Leicester Ford's *The True George Washington* and *Janice Meredith*. For poems about Washington, see Burton E. Stevenson's two anthologies: *Poems of American History* and *Great Americans as Seen by the Poets*. For Washington as a writer, see the chapter by Rupert Hughes in John Macy, *American Writers on American Literature*.

To understand the real Washington, it is well to go back to the impressions received by those who knew the man. Jefferson's admirable portrait appears on pages 151-152 of this volume. An excellent brief account which came to light only a few years ago is that of François, Marquis de Barbé-Marbois, who was Secretary of the French Legation in America during the Revolution. Professor Eugene Parker Chase translated and published in 1929 some of Barbé-Marbois's letters under the title *Our Revolutionary Forefathers*. This intelligent Frenchman, who saw Washington with his army in 1779, thus describes him:

"He received us with a noble, modest, and gentle urbanity and with that graciousness which seems to be the basis of his character. He is fifty years old, well built, rather thin. He carries himself freely and with a sort of military grace. He is masculine looking, without his features' being less gentle on that account. I have never seen anyone who was more naturally and spontaneously polite. His eyes are blue and rather large, his mouth and nose are regular, and his forehead open. His uniform is exactly like that of his soldiers. Formerly, on solemn occasions, that is to say on days of battle, he wore a large blue sash, but he has given up that unrepubli- can distinction. I have been told that he preserves in battle the character of humanity which makes him so dear to his soldiers in camp. I have seen him for some time in the midst of his staff, and he has always appeared even-tempered, tranquil, and orderly in his occupations, and serious in his conversation. He asks few questions, listens attentively, and answers in a low tone and with few words. He is serious in business. Outside of that, he permits himself a restricted gaiety. His conversation is as simple as his habits and his appearance. He makes no pretensions, and does the honors of his house with dignity, but without pompousness or flattery. His aides-de-camp preside at his table and offer the toasts. Before being the head of the American army, he did not disdain the care of his farm. To-day he sometimes throws and catches a ball for whole hours with his aides-de-camp. He is reverent without bigotry, and abhors swearing, which he punishes with the greatest severity. As to his public conduct, ask his compatriots, and the universe."

LETTERS

TO MRS. MARTHA WASHINGTON

PHILADELPHIA, 18 June, 1775.

MY DEAREST,

I am now set down to write to you on a subject, which fills me with inexpressible concern,

and this concern is greatly aggravated and increased, when I reflect upon the uneasiness I know it will give you. It has been determined in Congress, that the whole army raised for the defence of the American cause shall be put under my care, and that it is necessary for me to proceed immediately to Boston to take upon me the command of it.

You may believe me, my dear Patsy, when I assure you, in the most solemn manner, that, so far from seeking this appointment, I have used every endeavor in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part with you and the family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too great for my capacity, and that I should enjoy more real happiness in one month with you at home, than I have the most distant prospect of finding abroad, if my stay were to be seven times seven years. But as it has been a kind of destiny, that has thrown me upon this service, I shall hope that my undertaking it is designed to answer some good purpose. You might, and I suppose did perceive, from the tenor of my letters, that I was apprehensive I could not avoid this appointment, as I did not pretend to intimate when I should return. That was the case. It was utterly out of my power to refuse this appointment, without exposing my character to such censures, as would have reflected dishonor upon myself, and given pain to my friends. This, I am sure, could not, and ought not, to be pleasing to you, and must have lessened me considerably in my own esteem. I shall rely, therefore, confidently on that Providence, which has heretofore preserved and been bountiful to me, not doubting but that I shall return safe to you in the fall. I shall feel no pain from the toil or the danger of the campaign; my unhappiness will flow from the uneasiness I know you will feel from being left alone. I therefore beg, that you will summon your whole fortitude, and pass your time as agreeably as possible. Nothing will give me so much sincere satisfaction as to hear this, and to hear it from your own pen. My earnest and ardent desire is, that you would pursue any plan that is most likely to produce content, and a tolerable degree of tranquillity; as it must add greatly to my uneasy feelings to hear, that you are dissatisfied or complaining at what I really could not avoid.

As life is always uncertain, and common prudence dictates to every man the necessity of settling his temporal concerns, while it is in his power, and while the mind is calm and undisturbed, I have, since I came to this place (for I had not time to do it before I left home) got Colonel Pendleton to draft a will for me, by the directions I gave him, which will I now enclose. The provision made for you in case of my death will, I hope, be agreeable.

I shall add nothing more, as I have several let-

ters to write, but to desire that you will remember me to your friends, and to assure you that I am, with the most unfeigned regard, my dear Patsy, your affectionate, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

VALLEY FORGE, 23 December, 1777.

SIR:

Full as I was in my representation of the matters in the commissary's department yesterday, fresh and more powerful reasons oblige me to add, that I am now convinced beyond a doubt, that unless some great and capital change suddenly takes place in that line, this army must inevitably be reduced to one or other of these three things. starve, dissolve, or disperse in order to obtain subsistence in the best manner they can. Rest assured, Sir, this is not an exaggerated picture, and that I have abundant reason to suppose what I say.

Yesterday afternoon, receiving information that the enemy in force had left the city, and were advancing towards Derby with the apparent design to forage, and draw subsistence from that part of the country, I ordered the troops to be in readiness, that I might give every opposition in my power; when behold, to my great mortification, I was not only informed, but convinced, that the men were unable to stir on account of provision, and that a dangerous mutiny, begun the night before, and which with difficulty was suppressed by the spirited exertions of some officers, was still much to be apprehended for want of this article. This brought forth the only commissary in the purchasing line in this camp; and, with him, this melancholy and alarming truth, that he had not a single hoof of any kind to slaughter, and not more than twenty-five barrels of flour! From hence form an opinion of our situation when I add that he could not tell when to expect any.

All I could do, under these circumstances, was to send out a few light parties to watch and harass the enemy, whilst other parties were instantly detached different ways to collect, if possible, as much provision as would satisfy the present pressing wants of the soldiery. But will this answer? No, Sir; three or four days of bad weather would prove our destruction. What then is to become of the army this winter? And if we are so often without provisions now, what is to be-

come of us in the spring, when our force will be collected, with the aid perhaps of militia, to take advantage of an early campaign, before the enemy can be reinforced? These are considerations of great magnitude, meriting the closest attention; and they will, when my own reputation is so intimately connected with the event and to be affected by it, justify my saying that the present commissaries are by no means equal to the execution of the office, or that the disaffection of the people is past all belief. The misfortune, however, does in my opinion proceed from both causes, and, though I have been tender heretofore of giving any opinion, or lodging complaints, as the change in that department took place contrary to my judgment, and the consequences thereof were predicted, yet, finding that the inactivity of the army, whether for want of provisions, clothes, or other essentials, is charged to my account, not only by the common vulgar but by those in power, it is time to speak plain in exculpation of myself. With truth, then, I can declare, that no man, in my opinion, ever had his measures more impeded than I have, by every department of the army.

Since the month of July we have had no assistance from the quartermaster-general, and to want of assistance from this department the commissary-general charges great part of his deficiency. To this I am to add, that, notwithstanding it is a standing order, and often repeated, that the troops shall always have two days' provisions by them, that they might be ready at any sudden call; yet an opportunity has scarcely ever offered, of taking an advantage of the enemy, that has not been either totally obstructed, or greatly impeded, on this account. And this, the great and crying evil, is not all. The soap, vinegar, and other articles allowed by Congress, we see none of, nor have we seen them, I believe, since the battle of Brandywine. The first, indeed, we have now little occasion for; few men having more than one shirt, many only the moiety of one, and some none at all. In addition to which, as a proof of the little benefit received from a clothier-general, and as a further proof of the inability of an army, under the circumstances of this, to perform the common duties of soldiers, (besides a number of men confined to hospitals for want of shoes, and others in farmers' houses on the same account,) we have, by a field-return this day made, no less than two thousand eight

hundred and ninety-eight men now in camp unfit for duty, because they are barefoot and otherwise naked. By the same return it appears that our whole strength in Continental troops, including the eastern brigades, which have joined us since the surrender of General Burgoyne, exclusive of the Maryland troops sent to Wilmington, amounts to no more than eight thousand two hundred in camp fit for duty. Notwithstanding which, and that since the 4th instant, our numbers fit for duty, from the hardships and exposures they have undergone, particularly on account of blankets (numbers having been obliged, and still are, to sit up all night by fires, instead of taking comfortable rest in a natural and common way), have decreased near two thousand men.

We find gentlemen, without knowing whether the army was really going into winter-quarters or not (for I am sure no resolution of mine would warrant the remonstrance), reprobating the measure as much as if, they thought the soldiers were made of stocks or stones, and equally insensible of frost and snow; and moreover, as if they conceived it easily practicable for an inferior army, under the disadvantages I have described ours to be, which are by no means exaggerated, to confine a superior one, in all respects well-appointed and provided for a winter's campaign, within the city of Philadelphia, and to cover from depredation and waste the States of Pennsylvania and Jersey. But what makes this matter still more extraordinary in my eye is that these very gentlemen—who were well apprized of the nakedness of the troops from ocular demonstration, who thought their own soldiers worse clad than others, and who advised me near a month ago to postpone the execution of a plan I was about to adopt, on consequence of a resolve of Congress for seizing clothes, under strong assurances that an ample supply would be collected in ten days agreeably to a decree of the State (not one article of which, by the by, is yet come to hand)—should think a winter's campaign, and the covering of these States from the invasion of an enemy, so easy and practicable a business. I can assure those gentlemen that it is a much easier and less distressing thing to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room by a good fireside, than to occupy a cold bleak hill, and sleep under frost and snow, without clothes or blankets. However, although they seem to have little feeling for the naked and distressed soldiers, I feel super-

abundantly for them, and, from my soul, I pity those miseries, which it is neither in my power to relieve or prevent.

It is for these reasons, therefore, that I have dwelt upon the subject; and it adds not a little to my other difficulties and distress to find that much more is expected of me than is possible to be performed, and that upon the ground of safety and policy I am obliged to conceal the true state of the army from public view, and thereby expose myself to detraction and calumny. The honorable committee of Congress went from camp fully possessed of my sentiments respecting the establishment of this army, the necessity of auditors of accounts, the appointment of officers, and new arrangements. I have no need, therefore, to be prolix upon these subjects, but I refer to the committee. I shall add a word or two to show, first, the necessity of some better provision for binding the officers by the tie of interest to the service, as no day nor scarce an hour passes without the offer of a resigned commission; (otherwise I much doubt the practicability of holding the army together much longer, and in this I shall probably be thought the more sincere when I freely declare that I do not myself expect to derive the smallest benefit from any establishment that Congress may adopt, otherwise than as a member of the community at large in the good which I am persuaded will result from the measure, by making better officers and better troops); and, secondly to point out the necessity of making the appointments and arrangements without loss of time. We have not more than three months in which to prepare a great deal of business. If we let these slip or waste, we shall be laboring under the same difficulties all next campaign as we have been this, to rectify mistakes and bring things to order.

Military arrangement, and movements in consequence, like the mechanism of a clock, will be imperfect and disordered by the want of a part. In a very sensible degree have I experienced this in the course of the last summer, several brigades having no brigadiers appointed to them till late, and some not at all; by which means it follows that an additional weight is thrown upon the shoulders of the Commander-in-chief, to withdraw his attention from the great line of his duty. The gentlemen of the committee, when they were at camp, talked of an expedient for adjusting these matters, which I highly approved

and wish to see adopted; namely, that two or three members of the Board of War, or a committee of Congress, should repair immediately to camp, where the best aid can be had, and with the commanding officer, or a committee of his appointment, prepare and digest the most perfect plan that can be devised for correcting all abuses and making new arrangements, considering what is to be done with the weak and debilitated regiments, if the States to which they belong will not draft men to fill them, for as to enlisting soldiers it seems to me to be totally out of the question; together with many other things that would occur in the course of such a conference; and after digesting matters in the best manner they can, to submit the whole to the ultimate determination of Congress.

If this measure is approved, I would earnestly advise the immediate execution of it, and that the commissary-general of purchases, whom I rarely see, may be directed to form magazines without a moment's delay in the neighborhood of this camp, in order to secure provisions for us in case of bad weather. The quartermaster-general ought also to be busy in his department. In short, there is as much to be done in preparing for a campaign, as in the active part of it. Everything depends upon the preparation that is made in the several departments, and the success or misfortunes of the next campaign will more than probably originate with our activity or supineness during this winter. I have the honor to be, &c.

FAREWELL ADDRESS (1796)

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS,

The period for a new election of a citizen to administer the executive government of the United States being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the jus-

to be assured that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country,—and that, in withdrawing the tender of service, which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest, no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness; but act under and am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in, the office to which your suffrages have twice called me, have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I rejoice that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty or propriety; and am persuaded, whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous task were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust I will only say that I have, with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the government the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself; and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services they were

temporary, I have the consolation to believe that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country for the many honors it has conferred upon me; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise and as an instructive example in our annals, that under circumstances in which the passions agitated in every direction were liable to mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious, vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging, in situations in which not unfrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism, the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to the grave as a strong incitement to unceasing vows that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free Constitution which is the work of your hands may be sacredly maintained; that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue; that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States under the auspices of liberty may be made complete, by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, natural to that solicitude, urge me on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appears to me all-important to the permanency of your felicity as a people. These will be

offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsels. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The unity of government which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you. It is justly so, for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence; the support of your tranquillity at home, your peace abroad, of your safety, of your prosperity in every shape, of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee that from different causes, and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the Palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned, and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens by birth or choice of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of AMERICAN, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together.

The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole.

The North in an unrestrained intercourse with the South, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The South in the same intercourse, benefiting by the agency of the North, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the North, it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and while it contributes in different ways to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength to which itself is unequally adapted. The East, in a like intercourse with the West, already finds,—and in the progressive improvement of interior communications by land and water will more and more find—a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad or manufactures at home. The West derives from the East supplies requisite to its growth and comfort, and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the secure enjoyment of indispensable outlets for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest, as one nation. Any other tenure by which the West can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foreign power, must be intrinsically precarious.

While, then, every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in union, all the parts combined in the united mass of means and efforts cannot fail to find greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations; and, what is of inestimable value,

they must derive from union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves, which so frequently afflict neighboring countries not tied together by the same government, which their own rivalry alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues would stimulate and embitter. Hence, likewise, they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments which under any form of government are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty. In this sense it is that your union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the Union as a primary object of patriotic desire. Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. It is well worth a fair and full experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to union affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as matter of serious concern that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations, Northern and Southern, Atlantic and Western; whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart burnings which spring from these misrepresentations; they tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our Western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head. They have seen, in the nego-

5 tiation by the executive and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the General Government and in the Atlantic States unfriendly to their interests in regard to the Mississippi; they have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties, that with Great Britain and that with Spain, which secure to them everything they could desire in respect to our foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the Union by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren, and connect them with aliens?

20 To the efficacy and permanency of your Union, a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however strict, between the parts can be an adequate substitute. They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a constitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This Government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government. But the constitution which at any time exists, till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government, presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations, under what-

ever plausible character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of a party—often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community—and, according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common councils, and modified by mutual interests. However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely in the course of time and things, to become potent engines by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government; destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

Towards the preservation of your Government and the permanency of your present happy state it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretexts. One method of assault may be to effect in the forms of the Constitution alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments, as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country; that facility in changes, upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion; and remember especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its

surest guardian. It is, indeed, little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the state, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation on the ruins of public liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight), the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the public councils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of one part against another, foment occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the doors to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government, and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This within certain limits is probably true; and in governments of a monarchical cast, patriotism may look with indulgence if not with favor upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose. And there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be by force of public opinion to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, instead of warming, it should consume.

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution in those entrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power and proneness to abuse it which predominates in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each the guardian of the public weal against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern; some of them in our country and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If in the opinion of the people the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead

to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

'T is substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?

Promote them, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible; avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should cooperate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind that towards the payment of debts there must be revenue; that to

have revenue there must be taxes; and no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and justice towards all nations. Cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct, and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt that in the course of time and things the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations, and passionate attachments for others, should be excluded; and that in place of them, just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges towards another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. Hence frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed and bloody contests. The nation prompted by ill-will and resentment sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity and adopts through passion what reason would reject: at other times it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, am-

bition, and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often—sometimes perhaps the liberty—of nations has been the victim.

So likewise a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions; by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld. And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation), facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practise the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak, towards a great and powerful nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens, the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy, to be useful, must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defense against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favorite, are liable to become suspected and

odious; while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence therefore it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon, to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest guided by our justice shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or caprice?

'T is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world; so far I mean as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements. (I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy.) I repeat it, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But in my opinion it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves by suitable establishments on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations are recommended by policy, humanity, and inter-

est But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand, neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences, consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing; establishing with powers so disposed—in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them—conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate, constantly keeping in view that 't is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another; that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that by such acceptance it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. 'T is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish; that they will control the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations. But if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism; this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated.

How far in the discharge of my official duties I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself the assurance of my own conscience is that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting war in Europe, my proclamation of the 22d of April 1793 is the index to my plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice and by that of your representatives in both Houses of Congress, the spirit of that meas-

ure has continually governed me, uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take and was bound in duty and interest to take a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it, with moderation, perseverance, and firmness.

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe that, according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred without anything more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me a predominant motive has been to endeavor to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and consistency which

is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize without alloy the sweet enjoyment of partaking in the midst of my fellow-citizens the benign influence of good laws under a free government, the ever favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors, and dangers.

United States, September 19th, 1796.

JAMES MADISON

1751 - 1836

The advice nearest to my heart and deepest in my convictions is, that the Union of the states be cherished and perpetuated. Let the open enemy to it be regarded as a Pandora with her box opened, and the disguised one as the serpent creeping with his death wiles into paradise.

—JAMES MADISON, "Advice to My Country" [written to be published after his death].

James Madison, fourth President of the United States, was one of the youngest of the Virginia statesmen of the Revolutionary period. Born on a plantation, he was educated at Prince-

ton, where he shared the literary interests of his friends, Philip Freneau and Hugh Henry Brackenridge. He had, in Jefferson's words, a "luminous and discriminating mind" and the ability to express his thoughts in "language pure, classical, and copious." He served in the Virginia General Assembly and the House of Representatives, he was for eight years Secretary of State under Jefferson and for eight more (1809-1817) President. Perhaps, however, his most distinguished service to his country was in the federal Constitutional Convention in 1787. He was instrumental in getting the Convention called, he drew up the "Virginia Plan," he kept a journal which is an important source of information about the proceedings, and in his own state he used all his influence to have the Constitution ratified. For at least three years before the Convention met he had systematically studied ancient and modern history to determine the best form of federal government.

The Federalist consists of eighty-five essays in support of the new Constitution which in 1787 and 1788 were published over the signature "Publius" in New York newspapers and addressed "To the People of the State of New York." The scheme was devised by Alexander Hamilton, but Madison and John Jay were also contributors. Older authorities attributed 51 of the essays to Hamilton, 5 to Jay, 14 to Madison, and 3 to the joint authorship of Hamilton and Madison. Douglass Adair, however, has presented forceful arguments (*William and Mary Quarterly*, April and July, 1944) for attributing to Madison also Numbers XLIX-LVIII. *The Federalist* is of course a partisan plea; it frequently indulges in repetition, and some of its historical allusions are of doubtful accuracy. It is, nevertheless, a classic in our political literature, and the Supreme Court has cited it as an authoritative interpretation of the Constitution. In Number X Madison shows a thorough understanding of the economic forces which determine political action. With some changes in terminology the essay can easily be applied to present-day parties and pressure groups. Charles A. Beard, the historian, has been quoted as saying that his ideas about the economic basis of history were derived not from Karl Marx but from Aristotle and Number X of *The Federalist*.

Gaillard Hunt, who published a life of Madison in 1902, is also the editor of Madison's *Writings* in nine volumes (1900-1910). See also Louis C. Schaedler, "James Madison, Literary Craftsman," *William and Mary Quarterly*, October, 1946, and Charles A. Beard's edition, *The Enduring Federalist* (1948).

from *THE FEDERALIST*

NO. X

(November 24, 1787)

[Factions and the Union]

Among the numerous advantages promised by a well-constructed union, none deserves to be more accurately developed than its tendency to break and control the violence of faction. The friend of popular governments never finds him-

self so much alarmed for their character and fate as when he contemplates their propensity to this dangerous vice. He will not fail, therefore, to set a due value on any plan which, without violating the principles to which he is attached, provides a proper cure for it. The instability, injustice, and confusion introduced into the public councils have, in truth, been the mortal diseases under which popular governments have everywhere perished; as they continue to be the favorite and fruitful topics from which the ad-

versaries to liberty derive their most specious declamations. The valuable improvements made by the American constitutions on the popular models, both ancient and modern, cannot certainly be too much admired, but it would be an unwarrantable partiality, to contend that they have as effectually obviated the danger on this side as was wished and expected. Complaints are everywhere heard from our most considerate and virtuous citizens, equally the friends of public and private faith and of public and personal liberty, that our governments are too unstable; that the public good is disregarded in the conflicts of rival parties; and that measures are too often decided, not according to the rules of justice, and the rights of the minor party, but by the superior force of an interested and overbearing majority. However anxiously we may wish that these complaints had no foundation, the evidence of known facts will not permit us to deny that they are in some degree true. It will be found, indeed, on a candid review of our situation, that some of the distresses under which we labor have been erroneously charged on the operation of our governments, but it will be found, at the same time, that other causes will not alone account for many of our heaviest misfortunes; and, particularly, for that prevailing and increasing distrust of public engagements, and alarm for private rights, which are echoed from one end of the continent to the other. These must be chiefly, if not wholly, effects of the unsteadiness and injustice with which a factious spirit has tainted our public administrations.

By a faction, I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community.

There are two methods of curing the mischiefs of faction: the one, by removing its causes; the other, by controlling its effects.

There are again two methods of removing the causes of faction: the one, by destroying the liberty which is essential to its existence; the other, by giving to every citizen the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests.

It could never be more truly said than of the first remedy, that it was worse than the disease.

Liberty is to faction what air is to fire, an aliment without which it instantly expires. But it could not be less folly to abolish liberty, which is essential to political life, because it nourishes faction, than it would be to wish the annihilation of air, which is essential to animal life, because it imparts to fire its destructive agency.

The second expedient is as impracticable as the first would be unwise. As long as the reason of man continues fallible, and he is at liberty to exercise it, different opinions will be formed. As long as the connection subsists between his reason and his self-love, his opinions and his passions will have a reciprocal influence on each other; and the former will be objects to which the latter will attach themselves. The diversity in the faculties of men, from which the rights of property originate, is not less an insuperable obstacle to a uniformity of interests. The protection of these faculties is the first object of government. From the protection of different and unequal faculties of acquiring property, the possession of different degrees and kinds of property immediately results; and from the influence of these on the sentiments and views of the respective proprietors, ensues a division of the society into different interests and parties.

The latent causes of faction are thus sown in the nature of man; and we see them everywhere brought into different degrees of activity, according to the different circumstances of civil society. A zeal for different opinions concerning religion, concerning government, and many other points, as well of speculation as of practice; an attachment to different leaders ambitiously contending for pre-eminence and power; or to persons of other descriptions whose fortunes have been interesting to the human passions, have, in turn, divided mankind into parties, inflamed them with mutual animosity, and rendered them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than to co-operate for their common good. So strong is this propensity of mankind to fall into mutual animosities, that where no substantial occasion presents itself, the most frivolous and fanciful distinctions have been sufficient to kindle their unfriendly passions and excite their most violent conflicts. But the most common and durable source of factions has been the various and unequal distribution of property. Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society. Those

who are creditors, and those who are debtors, fall under a like discrimination. A landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests, grow up of necessity in civilized nations, and divide them into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and views. The regulation of these various and interfering interests forms the principal task of modern legislation, and involves the spirit of party and faction in the necessary and ordinary operations of the government.

No man is allowed to be a judge in his own cause, because his interest would certainly bias his judgment, and, not improbably, corrupt his integrity. With equal, nay with greater reason, a body of men are unfit to be both judges and parties at the same time; yet what are many of the most important acts of legislation, but so many judicial determinations, not indeed concerning the rights of single persons, but concerning the rights of large bodies of citizens? And what are the different classes of legislators but advocates and parties to the causes which they determine? Is a law proposed concerning private debts? It is a question to which the creditors are parties on one side and the debtors on the other. Justice ought to hold the balance between them. Yet the parties are, and must be, themselves the judges; and the most numerous party, or, in other words, the most powerful faction must be expected to prevail. Shall domestic manufactures be encouraged, and in what degree, by restrictions on foreign manufactures? are questions which would be differently decided by the landed and the manufacturing classes, and probably by neither with a sole regard to justice and the public good. The apportionment of taxes on the various descriptions of property is an act which seems to require the most exact impartiality; yet there is, perhaps, no legislative act in which greater opportunity and temptation are given to a predominant party to trample on the rules of justice. Every shilling with which they overburden the inferior number, is a shilling saved to their own pockets.

It is in vain to say that enlightened statesmen will be able to adjust these clashing interests, and render them all subservient to the public good. Enlightened statesmen will not always be at the helm. Nor, in many cases, can such an adjustment be made at all without taking into view indirect and remote considerations, which will rarely prevail over the immediate interest which one party

may find in disregarding the rights of another or the good of the whole.

The inference to which we are brought is, that the *causes* of faction cannot be removed, and that relief is only to be sought in the means of controlling its *effects*.

If a faction consists of less than a majority, relief is supplied by the republican principle, which enables the majority to defeat its sinister views by regular vote. It may clog the administration, it may convulse the society; but it will be unable to execute and mask its violence under the forms of the Constitution. When a majority is included in a faction, the form of popular government, on the other hand, enables it to sacrifice to its ruling passion or interest both the public good and the rights of other citizens. To secure the public good and private rights against the danger of such a faction, and at the same time to preserve the spirit and the form of popular government, is then the great object to which our inquiries are directed. Let me add that it is the great desideratum by which this form of government can be rescued from the opprobrium under which it has so long labored, and be recommended to the esteem and adoption of mankind.

By what means is this object attainable? Evidently by one of two only. Either the existence of the same passion or interest in a majority at the same time must be prevented, or the majority, having such coexistent passion or interest, must be rendered, by their number and local situation, unable to concert and carry into effect schemes of oppression. If the impulse and the opportunity be suffered to coincide, we well know that neither moral nor religious motives can be relied on as an adequate control. They are not found to be such on the injustice and violence of individuals, and lose their efficacy in proportion to the number combined together, that is, in proportion as their efficacy becomes needful.

From this view of the subject it may be concluded that a pure democracy, by which I mean a society consisting of a small number of citizens, who assemble and administer the government in person, can admit of no cure for the mischiefs of faction. A common passion or interest will, in almost every case, be felt by a majority of the whole; a communication and concert result from the form of government itself; and there is nothing to check the inducements to sacrifice the weaker party or an obnoxious individual. Hence

it is that such democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention, have ever been found incompatible with personal security or the rights of property; and have in general been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths. Theoretic politicians, who have patronized this species of government, have erroneously supposed that by reducing mankind to a perfect equality in their political rights, they would, at the same time, be perfectly equalized and assimilated in their possessions, their opinions, and their passions.

A republic, by which I mean a government in which the scheme of representation takes place, opens a different prospect, and promises the cure for which we are seeking. Let us examine the points in which it varies from pure democracy, and we shall comprehend both the nature of the cure and the efficacy which it must derive from the Union.

The two great points of difference between a democracy and a republic are: first, the delegation of the government, in the latter, to a small number of citizens elected by the rest; secondly, the greater number of citizens, and greater sphere of country, over which the latter may be extended.

The effect of the first difference is, on the one hand, to refine and enlarge the public views, by passing them through the medium of a chosen body of citizens, whose wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country, and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations. Under such a regulation, it may well happen that the public voice pronounced by the representatives of the people, will be more consonant to the public good than if pronounced by the people themselves, convened for the purpose. On the other hand, the effect may be inverted. Men of factious tempers, of local prejudices, or of sinister designs, may, by intrigue, by corruption, or by other means, first obtain the suffrages, and then betray the interests, of the people. The question resulting is, whether small or extensive republics are more favorable to the election of proper guardians of the public weal; and it is clearly decided in favor of the latter by two obvious considerations:

In the first place, it is to be remarked that, however small the republic may be, the representatives must be raised to a certain number, in order

to guard against the cabals of a few, and that, however large it may be, they must be limited to a certain number, in order to guard against the confusion of a multitude. Hence, the number of representatives in the two cases not being in proportion to that of the two constituents, and being proportionally greater in the small republic, it follows that, if the proportion of fit characters be not less in the large than in the small republic, the former will present a greater option, and consequently a greater probability of a fit choice.

In the next place, as each representative will be chosen by a greater number of citizens in the large than in the small republic, it will be more difficult for unworthy candidates to practise with success the vicious arts by which elections are too often carried; and the suffrages of the people being more free, will be more likely to centre in men who possess the most attractive merit and the most diffusive and established characters.

It must be confessed that in this, as in most other cases, there is a mean, on both sides of which inconveniences will be found to lie. By enlarging too much the number of electors, you render the representative too little acquainted with all their local circumstances and lesser interests; as by reducing it too much, you render him unduly attached to these, and too little fit to comprehend and pursue great and national objects. The federal Constitution forms a happy combination in this respect; the great and aggregate interests being referred to the national, the local and particular to the State legislatures.

The other point of difference is, the greater number of citizens and extent of territory which may be brought within the compass of republican than of democratic government; and it is this circumstance principally which renders factious combinations less to be dreaded in the former than in the latter. The smaller the society, the fewer probably will be the distinct parties and interests composing it; the fewer the distinct parties and interests, the more frequently will a majority be found of the same party; and the smaller the number of individuals composing a majority, and the smaller the compass within which they are placed, the more easily will they concert and execute their plans of oppression. Extend the sphere, and you take in a greater variety of parties and interests; you make it less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other citi-

zens; or if such a common motive exists, it will be more difficult for all who feel it to discover their own strength, and to act in unison with each other. Besides other impediments, it may be remarked that, where there is a consciousness of unjust or dishonorable purposes, communication is always checked by distrust in proportion to the number whose concurrence is necessary.

Hence, it clearly appears, that the same advantage which a republic has over a democracy, in controlling the effects of faction, if enjoyed by a large over a small republic,—is enjoyed by the Union over the States composing it. Does the advantage consist in the substitution of representatives whose enlightened views and virtuous sentiments render them superior to local prejudices and to schemes of injustice? It will not be denied that the representation of the Union will be most likely to possess those requisite endowments. Does it consist in the greater security afforded by a greater variety of parties, against the event of any one party being able to outnumber and oppress the rest? In an equal degree does the increased variety of parties comprised within the Union, increase this security? Does it, in fine, consist in the greater obstacles opposed to the concert and accomplishment of the secret wishes of

an unjust and interested majority? Here, again, the extent of the Union gives it the most palpable advantage.

The influence of factious leaders may kindle a flame within their particular States, but will be unable to spread a general conflagration through the other States. A religious sect may degenerate into a political faction in a part of the confederacy; but the variety of sects dispersed over the entire face of it must secure the national councils against any danger from that source. A rage for paper money, for an abolition of debts, for an equal division of property, or for any other improper and wicked project will be less apt to pervade the whole body of the Union than a particular member of it; in the same proportion as such a malady is more likely to taint a particular county or district than an entire State.

In the extent and proper structure of the Union, therefore, we behold a republican remedy for the diseases most incident to republican government. And according to the degree of pleasure and pride we feel in being republicans, ought to be our zeal in cherishing the spirit and supporting the character of federalists.

PUBLIUS.

MICHEL-GUILLAUME JEAN DE CRÈVECŒUR

1735 - 1813

By temperament and education of a conservative turn, I saw the last years of that quaint Arcadia which French travellers saw with delighted amazement a century ago, and have watched the change (to me a sad one) from an agricultural to a proletary population.

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, "Democracy" (1884).

Crèveccœur was born near Caen in Normandy, France, and educated at the Jesuit Collège du Mont in Caen. In 1753 he went to England, where he lived for a time with relatives

near Salisbury. The next year he came to the New World, probably to Canada. He is supposed to have served under Montcalm and to have been a surveyor and explorer in what is now the Middle West. In 1759 he came to New York. After wandering through most of the colonies he became in 1765 a naturalized citizen of New York under the name John Hector St. John. In 1769 he married Mehitable Tippet of Yonkers, New York. He was for some years a farmer in that state. The twelfth letter of his *Letters from an American Farmer* (most of which would seem to have been written before the Revolution) reveals his distress at having to choose between his allegiance to the king and the cause of the Revolutionists. On the whole, his sympathies lay with the rebels. In 1780 he sailed for Europe. His *Letters* was published in London in 1782. Two years later an enlarged version in French appeared in Paris under the title, *Lettres d'un cultivateur américain*. Further letters were published in 1925 under the title, *Sketches of Eighteenth Century America*, edited by H. L. Bourdin, R. H. Gabriel, and Stanley T. Williams. In 1783 Crèvecoeur returned to America to discover that his house had been burned and his wife had died. In 1790 he returned to France. In 1801 he published *Voyage dans la haute Pensylvanie et dans l'état de New-York*. He died in Normandy in 1813.

Crèvecoeur's point of view is only in part American. For him life in the New World is colored not only by his own keen observation but also by the French tendency to idealize the natural and the primitive so noticeable in Rousseau. More clearly than most Americans, he saw that the New World environment was a melting pot converting men of various European nationalities into a new type. There are numerous editions of the *Letters*. For biography, see Robert de Crèvecoeur, *Saint John Crèvecoeur: sa vie et ses ouvrages* (1883); Julia P. Mitchell, *St. Jean de Crèvecoeur* (1916), H. L. Rice, *Le cultivateur américain: étude sur l'œuvre de Saint John de Crèvecoeur* (1933), and Stanley T. Williams's sketch in *D. A. B.*

from LETTERS FROM AN AMERICAN
FARMER (1782)

III. WHAT IS AN AMERICAN?

I wish I could be acquainted with the feelings and thoughts which must agitate the heart and present themselves to the mind of an enlightened Englishman, when he first lands on this continent. He must greatly rejoice that he lived at a time to see this fair country discovered and settled; he must necessarily feel a share of national pride, when he views the chain of settlements which embellishes these extended shores. When he says to himself, this is the work of my countrymen, who, when convulsed by factions, afflicted by a variety of miseries and wants, restless and impatient, took refuge here. They brought along

with them their national genius, to which they principally owe what liberty they enjoy, and what substance they possess. Here he sees the industry of his native country displayed in a new manner, and traces in their works the embryos of all the arts, sciences, and ingenuity which flourish in Europe. Here he beholds fair cities, substantial villages, extensive fields, an immense country filled with decent houses, good roads, orchards, meadows, and bridges, where an hundred years ago all was wild, woody, and uncultivated! What a train of pleasing ideas this fair spectacle must suggest; it is a prospect which must inspire a good citizen with the most heartfelt pleasure. The difficulty consists in the manner of viewing so extensive a scene. He is arrived on a new continent; a modern society offers itself to his contemplation, different from what he had hitherto

seen. It is not composed, as in Europe, of great lords who possess everything, and of a herd of people who have nothing. Here are no aristocratical families, no courts, no kings, no bishops, no ecclesiastical dominion, no invisible power giving to a few a very visible one; no great manufacturers employing thousands, no great refinements of luxury. The rich and the poor are not so far removed from each other as they are in Europe. Some few towns excepted, we are all tillers of the earth, from Nova Scotia to West Florida. We are a people of cultivators, scattered over an immense territory, communicating with each other by means of good roads and navigable rivers, united by the silken bands of mild government, all respecting the laws, without dreading their power, because they are equitable. We are all animated with the spirit of an industry which is unfettered and unrestrained, because each person works for himself. If he travels through our rural districts he views not the hostile castle, and the haughty mansion, contrasted with the clay-built hut and miserable cabin, where cattle and men help to keep each other warm, and dwell in meanness, smoke, and indigence. A pleasing uniformity of decent competence appears throughout our habitations. The meanest of our log-houses is a dry and comfortable habitation. Lawyer or merchant are the fairest titles our towns afford; that of a farmer is the only appellation of the rural inhabitants of our country. It must take some time ere he can reconcile himself to our dictionary, which is but short in words of dignity, and names of honour. There, on a Sunday, he sees a congregation of respectable farmers and their wives, all clad in neat homespun, well mounted, or riding in their own humble waggons. There is not among them an esquire, saving the unlettered magistrate. There he sees a parson as simple as his flock, a farmer who does not riot on the labour of others. We have no princes, for whom we toil, starve, and bleed; we are the most perfect society now existing in the world. Here man is free as he ought to be; nor is this pleasing equality so transitory as many others are. Many ages will not see the shores of our great lakes replenished with inland nations, nor the unknown bounds of North America entirely peopled. Who can tell how far it extends? Who can tell the millions of men whom it will feed and contain? for no European foot has as yet travelled half the extent of this mighty continent!

The next wish of this traveller will be to know whence came all these people? they are a mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes. From this promiscuous breed, that race now called Americans have arisen. The eastern provinces¹ must indeed be excepted, as being the unmixed descendants of Englishmen. I have heard many wish that they had been more intermixed also: for my part, I am no wisher, and think it much better as it has happened. They exhibit a most conspicuous figure in this great and variegated picture; they too enter for a great share in the pleasing perspective displayed in these thirteen provinces. I know it is fashionable to reflect on them, but I respect them for what they have done; for the accuracy and wisdom with which they have settled their territory, for the decency of their manners; for their early love of letters; their ancient college, the first in this hemisphere; for their industry; which to me who am but a farmer, is the criterion of everything. There never was a people, situated as they are, who with so ungrateful a soil have done more in so short a time. Do you think that the monarchical ingredients which are more prevalent in other governments, have purged them from all foul stains? Their histories assert the contrary.

In this great American asylum, the poor of Europe have by some means met together, and in consequence of various causes; to what purpose should they ask one another what countrymen they are? Alas, two thirds of them had no country. Can a wretch who wanders about, who works and starves, whose life is a continual scene of sore affliction or pinching penury; can that man call England or any other kingdom his country? A country that had no bread for him, whose fields procured him no harvest, who met with nothing but the frowns of the rich, the severity of the laws, with jails and punishments; who owned not a single foot of the extensive surface of this planet? No! urged by a variety of motives, here they came. Every thing has tended to regenerate them; new laws, a new mode of living, a new social system; here they are become men: in Europe they were as so many useless plants, wanting vegetative mould, and refreshing showers; they withered, and were mowed down by want, hunger, and war; but now by the power of transplantation, like all other plants they have taken root and flourished! Formerly they were not num-

¹ New England.

bered in any civil lists of their country, except in those of the poor; here they rank as citizens. By what invisible power has this surprising metamorphosis been performed? By that of the laws and that of their industry. The laws, the indulgent laws, protect them as they arrive, stamping on them the symbol of adoption; they receive ample rewards for their labours; these accumulated rewards procure them lands; those lands confer on them the title of freemen, and to that title every benefit is affixed which man can possibly require. This is the great operation daily performed by our laws. From whence proceed these laws? From our government. Whence the government? It is derived from the original genius and strong desire of the people ratified and confirmed by the crown. This is the great chain which links us all, this is the picture which every province exhibits, Nova Scotia excepted. There the crown has done all; either there were no people who had genius, or it was not much attended to: the consequence is, that the province is very thinly inhabited indeed; the power of the crown in conjunction with the musketos has prevented men from settling there. Yet some parts of it flourished once, and it contained a mild harmless set of people. But for the fault of a few leaders, the whole were banished. The greatest political error the crown ever committed in America, was to cut off men from a country which wanted nothing but men!

What attachment can a poor European emigrant have for a country where he had nothing? The knowledge of the language, the love of a few kindred as poor as himself, were the only cords that tied him: his country is now that which gives him land, bread, protection, and consequence. *Ubi panis ibi patria*,² is the motto of all emigrants. What then is the American, this new man? He is either an European, or the descendant of an European, hence that strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country. I could point out to you a family whose

² Where my bread is, there is my country.

grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons have now four wives of different nations. He is an American, who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great *Alma Mater*. Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labours and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world. Americans are the western pilgrims, who are carrying along with them that great mass of arts, sciences, vigour, and industry which began long since in the east; they will finish the great circle. The Americans were once scattered all over Europe; here they are incorporated into one of the finest systems of population which has ever appeared, and which will hereafter become distinct by the power of the different climates they inhabit. The American ought therefore to love this country much better than that wherein either he or his forefathers were born. Here the rewards of his industry follow with equal steps the progress of his labour; his labour is founded on the basis of nature, *self-interest*; can it want a stronger allurements? Wives and children, who before in vain demanded of him a morsel of bread, now, fat and frolicsome, gladly help their father to clear those fields whence exuberant crops are to arise to feed and to clothe them all; without any part being claimed, either by a despotic prince, a rich abbot, or a mighty lord. Here religion demands but little of him; a small voluntary salary to the minister, and gratitude to God; can he refuse these? The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas, and form new opinions. From involuntary idleness, servile dependence, penury, and useless labour, he has passed to toils of a very different nature, rewarded by ample subsistence.—This is an American. - - -

JOHN TRUMBULL

1750 - 1831

*Hail favour'd state! CONNECTICUT! thy name
Uncouth in song, too long conceal'd from fame;
If yet thy filial bards the gloom can pierce,
Shall rise and flourish in immortal verse.*

—DAVID HUMPHREYS, *A Poem on the Industry
of the United States of America* (1794).

During the Revolutionary period and the years immediately following, the Connecticut or Hartford Wits (also referred to as Yale Poets) were most eager to create a national literature. Their greatest ambition was to write a national epic, but Timothy Dwight's *The Conquest of Canaan* and Joel Barlow's *The Columbiad* are unread today. Their less ambitious poems are more interesting to the modern reader. The Connecticut Wits are generally regarded as representing the conservative Federalist point of view, but this is not true of Joel Barlow at least. All of them were in sympathy with the Revolutionary cause and were influenced by the new ideals which accompanied it. Coming just before the Romantic Movement revolutionized our literature, they seem old-fashioned in their diction, style, and metrical forms.

John Trumbull was a precocious boy who passed the entrance examinations at Yale at the age of seven, although he did not actually enter until six years later. He studied law in Boston in the office of John Adams and practiced law in New Haven. In 1781 he moved to Hartford. He was for many years judge of the state supreme court. His most ambitious poem is *M'Fingal* (1775, 1781), a long Hudibrastic account of the dissensions between the Whigs and the Tories. *The Progress of Dulness* (1772-1773) is a satire on the educational system then in vogue. His "Elegy on the Times" reflects the feeling of New Englanders in the year preceding the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. The best edition of his poems is that brought out by the Andiron Club of New York in 1927. A convenient volume of selections is V. L. Parrington's *The Connecticut Wits* (1926). Alexander Cowie's *John Trumbull, Connecticut Wit* (1936) is a good study of Trumbull's literary career. Leon Howard's *The Connecticut Wits* (1943) is an excellent study not only of Trumbull but also of Timothy Dwight, Joel Barlow, and David Humphreys.

[The Future of American Literature]
from PROSPECT OF THE FUTURE
GLORY OF AMERICA: BEING THE
CONCLUSION OF AN ORATION,
DELIVERED AT
THE PUBLIC COMMENCEMENT
OF YALE COLLEGE,
SEPTEMBER 12, 1770

For pleasing Arts behold her matchless charms
The first in letters, as the first in arms.
See bolder genius quit the narrow shore,
And realms of science, yet untraced, explore,
Hiding in brightness of superior day,
The fainting gleam of Europe's setting ray.

Sublime the Muse shall lift her eagle wing;
Of heavenly themes the sacred bards shall sing,
Tell how the blest Redeemer, man to save,
Thro' the deep mansions of the gloomy grave,
Sought the low shades of night, then rising high
Vanquish'd the powers of hell, and soar'd above
the sky;

Or paint the scenes of that funereal day,
When earth's last fires shall mark their dreadful
way,

In solemn pomp th' eternal Judge descend,

Doom the wide world and give to nature, end,
Or ope heaven's glories to th' astonish'd eye,
And bid their lays with lofty Milton vie;
Or wake from nature's themes the moral song,
5 And shine with Pope, with Thomson and with
Young.

This land her Swift and Addison shall view
The former honors equall'd by the new;
10 Here shall some Shakespeare charm the rising
age,

And hold in magic chains the listening stage;
A second Watts¹ shall string the heavenly lyre,
And other muses other bards inspire.

15 Her daughters too the happy land shall grace
With powers of genius, as with charms of face,
Blest with the softness of the female mind,
With fancy blooming and with taste refined,
20 Some Rowe² shall rise, and wrest with daring pen
The pride of science from assuming men;
While each bright line a polish'd beauty wears,
For every muse and every grace are theirs.

25 ¹ Isaac Watts (1674-1748), author of hymns and
of poems for children.

² Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe (1674-1737), a forgotten
English poetess.

TIMOTHY DWIGHT

1752 - 1817

Dwight was a grandson of Jonathan Edwards, a graduate of Yale and president of the college from 1795 till his death in 1817, and one of the ablest ministers of his time. He was a conservative in religion, politics, and literature. His most ambitious work was *The Conquest of Canaan*, an epic completed in 1774 but not published until 1785. His best long poem is *Greenfield Hill*, which is not easily represented by brief extracts. For the modern reader, his most interesting book is his *Travels in New-England and New-York* (1821-1822) in four volumes. There is an excellent essay on Dwight in Moses Coit Tyler's *Three Men of*

Letters (1895), which includes an essay on another Hartford Wit, Joel Barlow. See also Leon Howard's *The Connecticut Wits* (1943) and Charles E. Cunningham's life (1942).

[The Smooth Divine]
from THE TRIUMPH OF INFIDELITY
(1788)

The Triumph of Infidelity is a long satire upon Deism and other forms of religious thought repugnant to the conservative Dwight. It was ironically dedicated to Voltaire.

There smiled the smooth Divine, unused to wound
The sinner's heart, with hell's alarming sound.
No terrors on his gentle tongue attend;
No grating truths the nicest ear offend.
That strange new-birth, that methodistic grace,
Nor in his heart nor sermons found a place.
Plato's fine tales he clumsily retold,
Trite, fireside, moral seesaws, dull as old;
His Christ and Bible placed at good remove,
Guilt hell-deserving, and forgiving love.
'Twas best, he said, mankind should cease to sin:
Good fame required it; so did peace within.
Their honors, well he knew, would ne'er be driven;
But hoped they still would please to go to heaven.
Each week he paid his visitation dues;
Coaxed, jested, laughed; rehearsed the private news;
Smoked with each goody, thought her cheese excelled;
Her pipe he lighted, and her baby held.
Or placed in some great town, with lacquered shoes,
Trim wig, and trimmer gown, and glistening hose,
He bowed, talked politics, learned manners mild;
Most meekly questioned, and most smoothly smiled;
At rich men's jests laughed loud, their stories praised;
Their wives' new patterns gazed, and gazed, and gazed;
Most daintily on pampered turkeys dined;
Nor shrunk with fasting, nor with study pined:

Yet from their churches saw his brethren driven,
Who thundered truth, and spoke the voice of heaven,
Chilled trembling guilt, in Satan's headlong path,
Charmed the feet back, and roused the ear of death.
"Let fools," he cried, "starve on, while prudent I
Snug in my nest shall lie, and snug shall die."

I LOVE THY KINGDOM, LORD
(1801)

This hymn, which is based upon Psalm CXXXVII, is the only hymn coming from Puritan New England which is still widely sung at the present time. The literary importance of hymns is not as generally recognized as it should be. See J. B. Reeves, *The Hymn as Literature* (1924).

I love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode,
The church, our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.

I love thy Church, O God!
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.

If e'er to bless thy sons
My voice, or hands, deny,
These hands let useful skill forsake,
This voice in silence die.

If e'er my heart forget
Her welfare, or her woe,
Let every joy this heart forsake,
And every grief o'erflow.

For her my tears shall fall;
For her my prayers ascend;
To her my cares and toils be given,
Till toils and cares shall end.

Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways,
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.

Jesus, thou Friend divine,
Our Saviour and our King,
Thy hand from every snare and foe
Shall great deliverance bring.

Sure as thy truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given
The brightest glories earth can yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven.

from TRAVELS IN NEW-ENGLAND
AND NEW-YORK (1821-1822)

LETTER XLVIII. FASHIONABLE EDUCATION

For many years Dwight took long journeys for his health during the Yale vacations. Foreign misrepresentations of his native New England seem to have prompted him to publish the four large volumes of his *Travels*. They are, he says, addressed to an English gentleman but were written for American readers. Letter XLVIII gives the reaction of a Puritan and a conservative to the increasing secularism of life and literature in Boston and other American cities.

DEAR SIR,

In a former letter I mentioned the attention, generally given to education by the inhabitants of Boston. I will now communicate to you some observations concerning a mode of education adopted to some extent, as I believe, both here and in many other places; particularly those which are wealthy and populous. In almost all instances, where it is pursued at all, it is chiefly confined to people of fashion.

The end, proposed by the parents, is to make their children objects of admiration. The means, though not sanctioned, are certainly characterized, by the end. That I have not mistaken the end may be easily proved by a single resort to almost any genteel company. To such company the children of the family are regularly introduced: and the praise of the guests is administered to them as regularly, as the dinner or the tea, is served up. Commendation is rung through

all its changes: and you may hear, both in concert and succession, "beautiful children"; "fine children"; "sweet children"; "lovely children"; "what a charming family!"; "what a delightful family!"; "you are a fine little fellow"; "you are a sweet little girl"; "My son, can't you speak one of your pieces before this good company?" "Caroline, where is your work?" "Susan, bring Miss Caroline's work, and show it to that lady"; "Susan, bring with you the picture, which she finished last week"; with many other things of a similar nature. Were you to pass a twelve month in this country, and to believe all that you heard said by people, not destitute of respectability; whatever opinion you might form of the parents, you would suppose, that the children were a superiour race of beings, both in person and mind; and that beauty, genius, grace, and loveliness, had descended to this world in form, and determined to make these States their future residence.

The means of effectuating this darling object are the communication of what are called accomplishments. The children are solicitously taught music, dancing, embroidery, ease, confidence, graceful manners, &c., &c. To these may be added what is called reading, and travelling. You may very naturally ask me what fault I find in these branches of education. My objection lies, originally to *the end, which is proposed, and to the direction, which it gives to the means*; in themselves harmless, and capable of being useful. Children educated in the manner to which I refer, soon learn, that the primary end of their efforts, and even of their existence, is *appearance only*. *What they are*, they soon discern is of little consequence; but *what they appear to be*, is of importance inestimable. The whole force of the early mind is directed, therefore, to this object; and exhausted in acquiring the trifles, of which it is composed.

The thoughts of a Boy, thus educated, are spent upon the colour, quality, and fashion, of his clothes, and upon the several fashions to which his dress is to be successively conformed; upon his bow, his walk, his mode of dancing, his behaviour in company, and his nice observance of the established rules of good breeding. To mingle without awkwardness or confusion in that empty, unmeaning chat, those mere vibrations of the tongue, termed fashionable conversation, is the ultimate aim of his eloquence; and to com-

prehend, and to discuss, without impropriety the passing topics of the day, the chief object of his mental exertions. When he reads, he reads, only to appear with advantage in such conversation. When he acts, he acts, only to be admired by those who look on. Novels, plays, and other trifles of a similar nature, are the customary subjects of his investigation. Voyages, travels, biography, and sometimes history, limit his severe researches. By such a mind thinking will be loathed, and study regarded with terror. In the pursuits, to which it is devoted, there is nothing to call forth, to try, or to increase, its strength. Its powers, instead of being raised to new degrees of energy, are never exercised to the extent, in which they already exist. His present capacity cannot be known for want of trial. What that capacity might become cannot be even conjectured. Destitute of that habit of labouring, which alone can render labour pleasing, or even supportable, he dreads exertion as a calamity. The sight of a Classic author gives him a chill: a lesson in Locke, or Euclid, a mental ague.

Thus in a youth, formed, perhaps, by nature for extensive views, and manly efforts, sloth of mind is generated, dandled, and nursed, on the knee of parental indulgence. A soft, luxurious, and sickly character is spread over both the understanding and the affections; which forbids their growth, prevents their vigour, and ruins every hope of future eminence, and future worth. The faculties of the mind, like those of the body, acquire strength, only by exercise. To attain their greatest strength, both must be exercised daily, and often to the utmost. Had Goliath never exerted the powers of his body, he would have been an infant in strength: had Newton never exerted those of his mind, he would have been an infant in understanding. Genius, in the abstract, is a mere capacity for exertion. This is the gift of nature; and is all that she gives. The utmost of this capacity can never be conjectured, until the mind has in a long continued, habitual course made its most vigorous efforts.

If these observations are just, they furnish every parent an easy and sure directory for the intellectual education of his children. If he wishes them to possess the greatest strength, of which they are capable, he must induce them to the most vigorous mental exertions. The reading education, which I have described, will never accomplish the purpose. Hard Study, a thorough

investigation of mathematical science, and a resolute attention to the most powerful efforts of distinguished Logicians; in a word, an old-fashioned, rigid, academical education will ever be found indispensable to the youth, who is destined to possess mental greatness.

On girls, this unfortunate system induces additional evils. Miss, the darling of her father and the pride of her mother, is taught from the beginning to regard her dress as a momentous concern. She is instructed in embroidery merely that she may finish a piece of work, which from time to time is to be brought out, to be seen, admired, and praised, by visitors; or framed, and hung up in the room, to be still more frequently seen, admired and praised. She is taught music, only that she may perform a few times, to excite the same admiration, and applause, for her skill on the forte piano. She is taught to draw, merely to finish a picture, which, when richly framed, and ornamented, is hung up, to become an altar for the same incense. Do not misunderstand me. I have no quarrel with these accomplishments. So far as they contribute to make the subject of them more amiable, useful, or happy, I admit their value. It is the *employment* of them, which I censure; the sacrifice, made by the parent of his property, and his child at the shrine of vanity.

The Reading of girls is regularly lighter than that of boys. When the standard of reading for boys is set too low, that for girls will be proportionately lowered. Where boys investigate books of sound philosophy, and labour in mathematical and logical pursuits; girls read history, the higher poetry, and judicious discourses in morality, and religion. When the utmost labour of boys is bounded by history, biography, and the pamphlets of the day: girls sink down to songs, novels, and plays.

Of this reading what, let me ask, are the consequences? By the first novel which she reads, she is introduced into a world, literally new; a middle region between "this spot which men call earth," and that which is formed in Arabian tales. Instead of houses, inhabited by mere men, women and children, she is presented with a succession of splendid palaces, and gloomy castles inhabited by tenants, half human and half angelic, or haunted by downright fiends. Every thing in the character and circumstances, of these beings comes at the wish, or the call of the enchanter. Whatever can supply their wants, suit their

wishes, or forward, or frustrate, their designs, is regularly at hand. The heroes are as handsome, as dignified, as brave, as generous, as affectionate, as faithful, and as accomplished, as he supposes will satisfy the demands of his readers. At the same time, they have always a quantum sufficit of money: or, if not, some Relation, dies at the proper time, and leaves them an ample supply. Every heroine is, also a compound of all that is graceful and lovely. Her person is fashioned "by the hand of harmony." Her complexion outvies the snow, and shames the rose. Her features are such, as Milton's Eve might envy; and her mind is of the same class with those refined beings, to whom this great poet in his list of the celestial Orders gives the elegant name of Virtues. With these delightful inhabitants of Utopia are contrasted iron-handed misers, profligate guardians, traitorous servants, and hags, not excelled by those of Lapland itself. It ought not to be omitted, that in this sequestered region the fields, and gardens, are all second-hand copies of paradise. On them whenever it is convenient, the morning beams with every tint of elegance, and every ray of glory: and, when Aurora has no further use for these fine things, her sister Evening, puts them on herself, and appears scarcely less splendid, or less delightful.

With this ideal world the unfortunate girl corresponds so much, and so long, that she ultimately considers it as her own proper residence. With its inhabitants she converses so frequently, and so habitually, that they become almost her only familiar acquaintance.

But she must one day act in the real world. What can she expect, after having resided so long in novels, but that fortunes, and villas and Edens, will spring up every where in her progress through life, to promote her enjoyment. She has read herself into a heroine, and is fairly entitled to all the appendages of this character. If her imagination may be trusted, she is to be romantically rich, and romantically happy. The mornings, which dawn upon her, are ever to be bright; the days serene; and the evenings fragrant and delightful. In a word, the curse pronounced upon mankind, is to her, to lose its gloomy influence: and sorrow, and toil, are to fly from the path, in which she chooses to walk through life.

With these views, how disappointed must she be by the rugged course of nature? How untoward must be the progress of facts? How coarsely

must the voice of truth grate upon her ear? How disgusted must she be to find herself surrounded not by trusty Johns, and faithful Chloes, but by ordinary domestics, chilling her, with rusticity, provoking her by their negligence, insulting her with their impudence, and leaving her service without even giving her warning. Must she not feel, that it is a kind of impertinence in the days to be cloudy, and wet; in the nights to be dark and chilly; in the streets to encumber her with mud, or choke her with dust; and in the prospects, to present nothing but the mere vulgar scenes of this vulgar world?

The very food, which she eats, (for eat she must,) will disgust her by its coarse unlikeness to the viands, on which her imagination has so often feasted. Her friends, even those most intimately connected with her, will lose all the amiableness, with which they are invested by natural affection, because they differ so grossly in their persons, manners and opinions, from the fine forms of fancy, and from the poetical minds, whose residence is a novel or a song. In a word, the world will become to her a solitude; and its inhabitants, strangers; because her taste for living has become too refined, too dainty, to relish any thing, found in real life.

If she is at all pleasing, and amiable, she will be addressed. But by whom? Not by a Corydon, a Strephon, or even a Grandison. At the best, her suitor will be a being formed of flesh and blood; who intends to live by business, and to acquire a reputation by diligence, integrity, and good sense. He is in pursuit of a wife; and, therefore, can hardly wish for an angel. It will be difficult for him to believe, that a being so exalted would assume the marriage vow; do the honours of his table; direct the business of his family; or preside over the education of his children. He has hitherto spent his life, perhaps, in acting vigorously in the counting-room, contending strenuously at the bar, or pursuing with diligence some other business merely human. How can such a being frame his mouth to lisp the pretty things, which alone can be in unison with so delicate an ear? Figure to yourself the disgust, the pain, the surprise, of this silken existence even at the most refined language of honesty, and at the most honourable sentiments of affection, obtruded on her by such a suitor.

Should some man of art, and mischief, happen to think the conquest worth obtaining; how

easily might she become a victim to the very accomplishments, in which she considers all excellence as involved?

Besides, this life is always, in some degree a season of suffering and sorrow. In what manner can our heroine encounter either? To patience, and fortitude, she has from her infancy been a stranger. With religion she is unacquainted. Principles, such as religion approves, she has none. This world has daily blasted all her expectations: with the future world she has not begun a connection. Between the Bible, and novels, there is a gulph fixed, which few novel readers are willing to pass. The consciousness of virtue, the dignified pleasure of having performed our duty, the serene remembrance of an useful life, the hope of an interest in the Redeemer, and the promise of a glorious inheritance in the favour of God, are never found in novels; and of course have never been found by her. A weary, distressed, bewildered voyager amid the billows of affliction, she looks around her in vain, to find a pilot, a polestar, or a shore.

Under the influence of this education, persons of both sexes, also, are in extreme danger of becoming the voluntary prey to the modern philosophy, and to the principles of enchantment, and perdition, which it so successfully holds out to minds, destitute of sound principle, and defensive prudence. Unaccustomed to think, they are pleased to find others willing to think for them. Unaccustomed to reason, their minds will be perplexed by every argument, advanced against their opinions. The admission of truth, the comprehension of good sense, requires the toil of sober, vigorous thought. The admission of fiction, and of philosophical as truly as of poetical fiction, demands nothing, but the luscious indulgence of fancy. To a soft and dainty mind, a taste fascinated by mental luxury, how much more congenial is the latter employment than the former. How improbable is it, how hopeless, that such a mind can fail to reject the dic-

tates of sober truth, and sound understanding, and from a self-indulgence, by habit rendered indispensable, imbibe the wretched doctrines, created by the philosophists of the present day? How improbable is it, that any mind, which has once imbibed these doctrines, can escape from absolute ruin?

I know, that this education is expressly attempted with a view to superiour refinement: but it is not a refinement of the taste, the understanding, or the heart. It is merely a refinement of the imagination; of an imagination, already soft, and sickly; of a sensibility, already excessive; of a relish, already fastidious. To a genuine perfection of taste it bears no more resemblance, than the delicate white of decay to the native fairness of complexion; or than the blush of a hectic to the bloom of health.

It is not here intended, that this mode of education prevails more in Boston, than in other populous places on this continent. Perhaps it prevails less. That it actually exists in such places, that it is fashionable, and that this town has a share in the evil, will not, I believe, be questioned. I have taken this occasion to enter my own protest against it. In every part of it the dictates of common sense are laid aside; that, which is of the least importance, is most regarded; and that, which is of the greatest, most forgotten. To enable children to appear with such fashionable advantages, as to gain admiration, and applause, is the sole concern. To enable them to be what they ought to be; wise, virtuous, and useful; is left out of the system. The mind, instead of being educated, is left to the care of accident, and fashion. Dress, manners, and accomplishments, are placed under expensive masters; and regulated with extreme solicitude. With this education, what can a son, or a daughter, become? Not a man, nor a woman; but a well dressed bundle of accomplishments. Not a blessing, nor an heir of immortality; but a fribble, or a doll.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

JOEL BARLOW

1755 - 1812

Barlow, another of the Hartford Wits or Yale Poets, served as chaplain in the Revolutionary army. After the war he became a lawyer and a diplomat. Less conservative than his Yale friends, he became an advocate of the principles of the French Revolution. His most important prose work is his *Advice to the Privileged Orders*, which reveals the influence of Thomas Paine as well as of French Revolutionary thinkers. Barlow's most ambitious work is *The Columbiad* (1807), an expanded form of *The Vision of Columbus* (1787). More to the modern taste, however, is *The Hasty Pudding* (1796), written in the comic epic style of Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*. The poem given below, "Advice to a Raven in Russia," has a power seldom found in the work of the Connecticut Wits. Barlow, at that time Minister to France, found it necessary to follow Napoleon into Russia on the disastrous campaign of 1812 in order to conduct the negotiations desired by the American government. Barlow, ill and thoroughly disillusioned concerning Napoleon's designs, dictated this bitter poem not long before he died.

For Barlow's life and writings, see Leon Howard, *The Connecticut Wits* (1943); T. A. Zunder, *The Early Days of Joel Barlow* (1934); C. B. Todd, *The Life and Letters of Joel Barlow* (1886); and M. C. Tyler, *Three Men of Letters* (1895).

from ADVICE TO THE PRIVILEGED ORDERS (1792)

The following selection is from Part I, Chapter IV, "The Administration of Justice." The full title of the book is *Advice to the Privileged Orders in the Several States of Europe, Resulting from the Necessity and Propriety of a General Revolution in the Principle of Government*.

It is a truth, I believe, not to be called in question, that every man is born with an imprescriptible claim to a portion of the elements;

which portion is termed his *birth-right*. Society may vary this right, as to its form, but never can destroy it in substance. She has no control over the man, till he is born; and the right being born with him, and being necessary to his existence, she can no more annihilate the one than the other, though she has the power of new-modelling both. But on coming into the world, he finds that the ground which nature had promised him is taken up, and in the occupancy of others; society has changed the form of his birth-right; the general stock of elements, from which

the lives of men are to be supported, has undergone a new modification, and his portion among the rest. He is told that he cannot claim it in its present form, as an independent inheritance; that he must draw on the stock of society, instead of the stock of nature; that he is banished from the mother and must cleave to the nurse. In this unexpected occurrence he is unprepared to act; but *knowledge* is a part of the stock of society; and an indispensable part to be allotted in the portion of the claimant is *instruction* relative to the new arrangement of natural right. To withhold this instruction therefore would be, not merely the omission of a duty, but the commission of a crime; and society in this case would sin against the man, before the man could sin against society.

I should hope to meet the assent of all unprejudiced readers, in carrying this idea still farther. In cases where a person is born of poor parents, or finds himself brought into the community of men without the means of subsistence, society is bound to furnish him the means. She ought not only to instruct him in the artificial laws by which property is secured, but in the artificial industry by which it is obtained. She is bound, in *justice* as well as policy, to give him some art or trade. For the reason of his incapacity is, that *she* has usurped his birth-right; and this is restoring it to him in another form, more convenient for both parties. The failure of society in this branch of her duty is the occasion of much the greater part of the evils that call for criminal jurisprudence. The individual feels that he is robbed of his natural right; he cannot bring his process to reclaim it from the great community, by which he is overpowered; he therefore feels authorized in reprisal; in taking another's goods to replace his own. And it must be confessed, that in numberless instances the conduct of society justifies him in this proceeding; she has seized upon his property, and commenced the war against him.

Some, who perceive these truths, say that it is unsafe for society to publish them; but I say it is unsafe not to publish them. For the party from which the mischief is expected to arise has the knowledge of them already, and has acted upon them in all ages. It is the wise who are ignorant of these things, and not the foolish. They are truths of nature; and in them the teachers of

mankind are the only party that remains to be taught. It is a subject on which the logic of indigence is much clearer than that of opulence. The latter reasons from contrivance, the former from feeling; and God has not endowed us with false feelings, in things that so weightily concern our happiness.

None can deny that the obligation is much stronger on me, to support my life, than to support the claim that my neighbour has to his property. Nature commands the first, society the second:—in one I obey the laws of God, which are universal and eternal; in the other, the laws of man, which are local and temporary.

It has been the folly of all governments, to begin every thing at the wrong end, and to erect their institutions on an inversion of principle. This is more sadly the case in their systems of jurisprudence, than is commonly imagined. *Compelling* justice is always mistaken for *rendering* justice. But this important branch of administration consists not merely in compelling men to be just to each other, and individuals to society,—this is not the whole, nor is it the principal part, nor even the beginning, of the operation. The source of power is said to be the source of justice; but it does not answer to this description, as long as it contents itself with *compulsion*. Justice must begin by flowing from its source; and the first as well as the most important object is, to open its channels from society to all the individual members. This part of the administration being well devised and diligently executed, the other parts would lessen away by degrees to matters of inferior consideration.

It is an undoubted truth, that our duty is inseparably connected with our happiness. And why should we despair of convincing every member of society of a truth so important for him to know? Should any person object, by saying, that nothing like this has ever yet been done; I answer, that nothing like this has ever yet been tried. Society has hitherto been curst with governments, whose existence depended on the extinction of truth. Every moral light has been smothered under the bushel of perpetual imposition; from whence it emits but faint and glimmering rays, always insufficient to form any luminous system on any of the civil concerns of men. But these covers are crumbling to the dust, with the governments which they support; and the prob-

ability becomes more apparent, the more it is considered, that society is capable of curing all the evils to which it has given birth.

It seems that men, to diminish the physical evils that surround them, connect themselves in society; and from this connection their moral evils arise. But the *immediate* occasion of the moral evils is nothing more than the *remainder* of the physical, that still exist even under the regulations that society makes to banish them. The direct object therefore of the government ought to be, to destroy as far as possible the remaining quantity of physical evils and the moral would so far follow their destruction. But the mistake that is always made on this subject is, that governments, instead of laying the ax at the root of the tree, aim their strokes at the branches; they attack the moral evils *directly* by vindictive justice, instead of removing the physical by distributive justice.

There are two distinct kinds of physical evils; one arises from want, or the apprehension of want; the other from bodily disease. The former seems capable of being removed by society; the latter is inevitable. But the latter gives no occasion to moral disorders; it being the common lot of all, we all bear our part in silence, without complaining of each other, or revenging ourselves on the community. As it is out of the power of our neighbour's goods to relieve us, we do not covet them for this purpose. The former is the only kind from which moral evils arise; and to this the energies of government ought to be chiefly directed; especially that part which is called the administration of justice.

No nation is yet so numerous, nor any country so populous, as it is capable of becoming. Europe, taken together, would support at least five times its present number, even on its present system of cultivation; and how many times this increased population may be multiplied by new discoveries in the infinite science of subsistence, no man will pretend to calculate. This of itself is sufficient to prove, that society at present has the means of rendering all its members happy in every respect, except the removal of bodily disease. The common stock of the community appears abundantly sufficient for this purpose. By common stock, I would not be understood to mean the goods exclusively appropriated to individuals. Exclusive property is not only consistent with good order among men, but it is

conceived by some to be necessary to the existence of society. But the common stock of which I speak consists, first, in *knowledge*, or the improvements which men have made in the means of acquiring a support, and secondly, in the *contributions* which it is necessary should be collected from individuals, and applied to the maintenance of tranquillity in the state. The property exclusively belonging to individuals can only be the surplusage remaining in their hands, after deducting what is necessary to the real wants of society. Society is the first proprietor; as she is the original cause of the appropriation of wealth, and its indispensable guardian in the hands of the individual.

Society then is bound, in the first place, to distribute knowledge to every person according to his wants, to enable him to be useful and happy; so far as to dispose him to take an active interest in the welfare of the state. *Secondly*, where the faculties of the individual are naturally defective, so that he remains unable to provide for himself, she is bound still to support and render him happy. It is her duty in all cases to induce every human creature, by rational motives, to place his happiness in the tranquillity of the public, and in the security of individual peace and property. But *thirdly*, in cases where these precautions shall fail of their effect, she is driven indeed to the last extremity,—she is to use the rod of correction. These instances would doubtless be rare; and, if we could suppose a long continuance of wise administration, such as a well-organized government would ensure to every nation in the world, we may almost persuade ourselves to believe that the necessity for punishment would be reduced to nothing.

ADVICE TO A RAVEN IN RUSSIA

(1812)

Black fool, why winter here? These frozen skies,
Worn by your wings and deafened by your cries,
Should warn you hence, where milder suns invite,
And Day alternates with his mother Night.
You fear, perhaps, your food may fail you there—
Your human carnage, that delicious fare,
That lured you hither, following still your friend,
The great Napoleon, to the world's bleak end.
You fear because the southern climes pour'd
forth

Their clustering nations to infest the north,
 Bavarians, Austrians, those who drink the Po
 And those who skirt the Tuscan seas below,
 With all Germania, Austria, Belgia, Gaul,
 Doom'd here to wade through slaughter to their
 fall.

You fear he left behind no wars to feed
 His feathered cannibals and nurse the breed?
 Fear not, my screamer, call your greedy train,
 Sweep over Europe, hurry back to Spain—
 You 'll find his legions there, the valiant crew,
 Please best their masters when they toil for you.
 Abundant there they spread the country o'er
 And taint the breeze with every nation's gore—
 Iberian,¹ Russian, British, widely strown,
 But still more wide and copious flows their own.
 Go where you will, Calabria,² Malta, Greece.
 Egypt and Syria still his fame increase.
 Domingo's fattened isle and India's plains
 Glow deep with purple drawn from Gallic veins.
 No raven's wing can stretch the flight so far
 As the torn bandrols³ of Napoleon's war.
 Choose then your climate, fix your best abode—
 He 'll make you deserts and he 'll bring you
 blood.

How could you fear a dearth? Have not mankind,
 Though slain by millions, millions left behind?
 Fear nothing, then! hatch fast your ravenous
 brood,

Teach them to cry to Buonaparte for food.
 They 'll be, like you, of all his suppliant train,
 The only class that never cries in vain!
 For see what natural benefits you lend—
 The surest way to fix the mutual friend—

¹ Spanish.

² Southern Italy.

³ Flags.

While on his slaughtered troops your tribes are
 fed,

You cleanse his camp and carry off his dead,
 Imperial scavenger, but now, you know,
 Your work is vain amid these hills of snow.
 His tentless troops are marbled through with
 frost,

And changed to crystal when the breath is lost.
 Mere trunks of ice, though limn'd like human
 frames,

And lately warmed with life's endearing flames.
 They cannot taint the air, the world infest,
 Nor can you tear one fiber from their breast.

No! from their visual sockets as they lie,
 With beak and claws you cannot pluck an eye—
 The frozen orb, preserving still its form,
 Defies your talons as it braves the storm,

But stands and stares to God as if to know,
 In what curst hands he leaves his world below!

Fly then, or starve, though all the dreadful road
 From Minsk to Moscow with their bodies strow'd
 May count some myriads, yet they can't suffice
 To feed you more beneath these dreadful skies.

Go back and winter in the wilds of Spain;
 Feast there awhile, and in the next campaign
 Rejoin your master, for you 'll find him then,

With his new millions of the race of men,
 Clothed in his thunders, all his flags unfurl'd,
 Raging and storming o'er a prostrate world!

War after war his hungry soul requires;
 State after state shall sink beneath his fires.
 Yet other Spains in victim smoke shall rise.
 And other Moscows suffocate the skies.

Each land lie reeking with its people slain
 And not a stream run bloodless to the main,
 Till men resume their souls, and dare to shed
 Earth's total vengeance on the monster's head!

PHILIP FRENEAU

1752 - 1832

... a man in every respect worthy to bear the title of "the father of American poetry."

—FRED LEWIS PATTEE, *The Poems of Philip Freneau* (1902), I, cxi.

Freneau, the leading poet of the Revolution, was born in New York of French Huguenot ancestry. When he was ten, the family moved to a large estate at Mount Pleasant near Middletown Point, New Jersey. Well prepared for college, he entered Princeton, "a hotbed of Whiggism," in 1768. He graduated in 1771, a classmate of H. H. Brackenridge, James Madison, and Aaron Burr. With Brackenridge he collaborated in writing a commencement poem, "The Rising Glory of America." In 1772 (see his letter dated November 22, 1772) he was teaching school in Maryland with Brackenridge. During the Revolution he wrote many poems in behalf of the cause of the rebels. In 1780, returning from the West Indies, he was captured and kept for two months on a British vessel—a terrible experience which he described in "The British Prison Ship." From 1784 to 1789, when he retired and married Eleanor Forman, he was captain of a ship which traded along the Atlantic coast. (See the letter of March 14, 1789.) He took part in various journalistic ventures. The best known of these was *The National Gazette*, which he edited, 1791–1793, and which caused George Washington to refer to him as "That rascal, Freneau." This organ of the Jeffersonians greatly irritated the Federalists, particularly Alexander Hamilton. From 1803 to 1807 Freneau was again a sea-captain. In later years he suffered from poverty and misfortune. He died on December 18, 1832, while trying to reach home at night during a violent snowstorm.

If Freneau's life had been spent in times of peace and plenty, he would have devoted himself entirely to poetry. He was well read in the classics and the British poets, and he had taste and talent. In him we find the first response to the growing Romantic Movement in England and on the continent. But circumstances forced him to devote his pen largely to politics and satire. Nevertheless, some of his poems have sufficient vitality to make it worth while for the modern reader to know them.

There are two editions of Freneau's poems, neither complete: Fred Lewis Pattee, *The Poems of Philip Freneau* (3 vols., 1902), which contains a biographical and critical introduction; and Harry Hayden Clark, *Poems of Philip Freneau* (1929), which contains a useful discussion of the poems. The standard biography is Lewis Leary, *That Rascal Freneau*:

A Study in Literary Failure (1941). Professor Leary's *The Last Poems of Philip Freneau* (1945) consists of uncollected poems. For further references, see Lewis Leary (ed.), *Articles on American Literature . . .* (1947).

LETTERS*

TO JAMES MADISON

SOMERSET COUNTY, IN MARYLAND,

November 22, 1772.

If I am not wrongly informed by my memory, I have not seen you since last April, you may recollect I was then undertaking a School at Flatbush on Long Island. I did not [*sic*] enter upon the business it is certain and continued in it thirteen days—but—"Long Island I have bid adieu, With all its bruitish, brainless crew. The youth of that detested place, Are void of reason and of grace. From Flushing hills to Flatbush plains, Deep ignorance unrivalled reigns." I'm very poetical, but excuse it. "Si fama non venit ad aures,"¹—if you have not heard the rumour of this story (which, by the by is told in various taverns and eating houses) you must allow me to be a little prolix with it. Those who employed me were some gentlemen of New York, some of them are bullies, some merchants, and others Scoundrels: They sent me eight children, the eldest of whom was 10 years. Some could read, others spell and a few stammer over a chapter of the Bible—these were my pupils and over these was I to preside. My salary moreover was £40,—there is something else relating to that I shall not at present mention—after I forsook them they proscribed me for four days and swore that if I was caught in New York they would either Trounce or Maim me: but I luckily escaped with my goods to Princetown—where I remained till commencement—so much for this affair.

* The two Freneau letters given here are reprinted from Fred Lewis Pattee, *The Poems of Philip Freneau*, by permission of the Princeton University Library.

¹ If the report has not come to your ears (Vergil).

I have printed a poem in New York called the American Village, containing about 450 Lines, also a few short pieces added; I would send you one if I had a proper opportunity—the additional poems are—A Poem to the Nymph I never saw—The miserable Life of a Pedagogue—and Stanzas on an ancient Dutch house on Long Island—As to the main poem it is damned by all good and judicious judges—my name is in the title page, this is called vanity by some—but "who so fond as youthful bards of fame?"

I arrived at this Somerset Academy the 18th of October, and intend to remain here till next October. I am assistant to Mr. Bra[c]kenridge. This is the last time I shall enter into such a business; it worries me to death and by no means suits my "giddy, wandring brain" I would go over for the gown this time two years, but the old hag Necessity has got such a prodigious gripe of me that I fear I shall never be able to accomplish it. I believe if I cannot make this out I must turn quack, and indeed I am now reading Physic at my leisure hours, that is, when I am neither sleeping, hearing classes, or writing Poetry—for these three take up all my time.

It is now late at night, not an hour ago I finished a little poem of about 400 lines, entitled a Journey to Maryland—being the Sum of my adventures—it begins "From that fam'd town where Hudson's flood—unites with Stream perhaps as good; Muse has your bard begun to roam —& I intend to write a terrible Satire upon certain vicious persons of quality in New York—who have also used me ill—and print it next fall it shall contain 5 or 600 lines. Sometimes I write pastorals to shew my Wit.

*"Deep to the woods I sing a Shepherd's care,
Deep to the woods, Cyllenus calls me there,
The last retreat of Love and Verse I go,
Verse made me mad at first and—will keep me so."*

I should have been glad to have heard from you before now; while I was in college I had but a short participation of your agreeable friendship, and the few persons I converse with and yet fewer, whose conversation I delight in, make me regret the Loss of it. I have met with a variety of rebuffs this year, which I forbear to mention, I look like an unmeaning Teague just turn'd out of the hold of an Irish Ship coming down hither I met with a rare adventure at Annapolis. I was destitute even of a brass farthing. I got clear very handsomely.

Could one expect ever to see you again, if I travel through Virginia I shall stop and talk with you a day or two. I shall be very glad to receive a letter from you if it can be conveniently forwarded—in short “Non sum qualis eram”² as Partridge says in Tom Jones—My hair is grown like a mop, and I have a huge tuft of beard directly upon my chin—I want but five weeks of twenty-one years of age and already feel stiff with age—We have about 30 Students in this academy, who prey upon me like Leaches—“When shall I quit this whimpering pack, and hide my head in Acomack,”—Shall I leave them and go “Where Pokomokes long stream meandering flows——

Excuse this prodigious scrawl without stile or sense—I send this by Mr. Luther Martin who will forward it to Col. Lee—and he to you I hope. Mr. Martin lives in Acomack in Virginia this side the bay. Farewell and be persuaded I remain your

truly humble Serv't and friend

PH. F-R-E-N-E-A-U-

TO FRANCIS BAILEY

YAMACRAW, SAVANNA, March 14th, 1789.

SIR: Amongst a number of good natured acquaintance, who have lately sympathized with me, on account of what they term my misfortunes,³ during great part of last year, I know of no one more entitled to my acknowledgments, on the occasion, than yourself. When an old woman talks of witches, ghosts, or blue devils, we naturally make an allowance for bad education, or the imbecility of intellect, occasioned by age.

² I am not what I was (Horace).

³ In the preceding July Freneau's ship had been caught in a storm and both vessel and cargo had been greatly damaged.

When one man seriously supposes another unfortunate, for the sake of two or three successive disasters, which no prudence or foresight could have avoided, the same allowance ought to be made, provided the same excuses could be assigned

Can you be serious, then in advising me to quit all future intercourse with an element, that has for some years, with all its dangers and losses, afforded to your humble servant attractions, far more powerful than those of Apollo! Formerly, when I wrote poetry, most of those that attended to it, would not allow my verses to be good. I gave credit to what I deemed the popular opinion, and made a safe retreat in due time, to the solitary wastes of Neptune. I am not, however, inclined to believe people so readily now, when they alledge my vessel is not sound, and when several gentlemen, for reasons best known to themselves, and perhaps not over willing to risque the uncertainties of the world to come, effect [*sic*] to doubt of her ability to waft their carcasses in safety.

But my ambition is greatly concerned in this matter: a schooner is confided to my care, humble, indeed, when compared to those lofty piles which I have seen you so much admire, but which is, nevertheless, really capable of an European, nay of an India voyage. Read all history, ransack libraries, call tradition to your aid, search all records, examine a million of manuscripts on vellum, on parchment, on paper, on marble, on what you please, and I defy you to find the most distant hint of any *poet*, in any age or country, from Hesiod down to Peter Pindar, having been trusted with the controul or possession of anything fit to be mentioned or compared with the same barque, which you say, I *have the misfortune to command*.

To be serious: misfortune ought to be only the topic of such men as do not think or reason with propriety, upon the nature of things. Some writer says, it is but another name for carelessness or inattention: Though that may not at all times be the case, it is in the power of every man to place himself beyond the supposed baneful influence of this inexorable deity, by *assuming* a dignity of mind, (if it be not the gift of nature) that will, in the end, get the better of the untoward events, that may frequently cross our best purposes. Indeed, the *sea* is the *best* school for philosophy (I mean of the moral kind);

in thirteen or fourteen years' acquaintance with this element, I am convinced that a man ought to imbibe more of your right genuine *stoical* stuff, than could be gained in half a century on shore.—I must add that, be our occupations what they may, or our fortunes what they will, there is a certain delectable, inexpressible satisfaction in now and then encountering the rubs and disasters of life, and I am entirely of the opinion which (says Dr. Langhorne)

*"Weakness wrote in Petrarch's gentle strain,
When once he own'd at love's unfavouring shrine
A thousand pleasures are not worth one pain!"*

I must now conclude this scrawl, with telling you, that I am receiving on board my vessel a

small cargo of lumber, at a place called Yama
craw, a little above Savanna. The weather is extremely warm, I am tired of my letter, and must, of course, conclude. I do not know whether you
5 ever mean to make a voyage to sea— if you should.
thrice welcome shall you be to such accommodations as my little embarkation affords. Poets and philosophers, shall ever travel with me at a cheap rate indeed! Not only because they are not
10 generally men of this world, but because, even supposing the barque that bears them, should make an external exit to the bottom of the ocean, the busy world, as things go, will regret the loss of most of them very little, perhaps not
15 at all.

Your's, &c.,
P. FRENEAU.

A POLITICAL LITANY

(June, 1775)

Libera Nos, Domine.—DELIVER US O LORD, *not only from
British Dependence, but also,*

From a junto that labour with absolute power,
Whose schemes disappointed have made them look sour,
From the lords of the council, who fight against freedom,
Who still follow on where delusion shall lead them.

From the group at St. James's, who slight our petitions, 5
And lools that are waiting for further submissions—
From a nation whose manners are rough and severe,
From scoundrels and rascals,—do keep us all clear.

From pirates sent out by command of the king 10
To murder and plunder, but never to swing;
From *Wallace* and *Greaves*, and *Vipers* and *Roses*,⁴
Who[m], if heaven pleases, we'll give bloody noses.

From the valiant *Dunmore*, with his crew of banditti, 15
Who plunder Virginians at *Williamsburg* city,
From hot-headed *Montague*, mighty to swear,
The little fat man with his pretty white hair.

From bishops in Britain, who butchers are grown, 20
From slaves that would die for a smile from the throne,
From assemblies that vote against *Congress proceedings*,
(Who now see the fruit of their stupid misleadings.)

⁴ Captains and ships in the British navy, then employed on the American coast. (Author's note.)

From *Tryon* the mighty, who flies from our city,
And swelled with importance disdains the committee:
(But since he is pleased to proclaim us his foes,
What the devil care we where the devil he goes)

5 From the caittiff, lord *North*, who would bind us in chains,
From a royal king Log, with his tooth-full of brains,
Who dreams, and is certain (when taking a nap)
He has conquered our lands, as they lay on his map.

10 From a kingdom that bullies, and hectors, and swears,
We send up to heaven our wishes and prayers
That we, disunited, may freemen be still,
And Britain go on—to be damned if she will.

TO THE MEMORY OF THE BRAVE AMERICANS

UNDER GENERAL GREENE, IN SOUTH
CAROLINA, WHO FELL IN THE ACTION OF
SEPTEMBER 8, 1781

(1781)

At Eutaw Springs the valiant died;
Their limbs with dust are covered o'er—
Weep on, ye springs, your tearful tide;
How many heroes are no more!

If in this wreck of ruin, they
Can yet be thought to claim a tear,
O smite your gentle breast, and say
The friends of freedom slumber here!

Thou, who shalt trace this bloody plain,
If goodness rules thy generous breast,
Sigh for the wasted rural reign;
Sigh for the shepherds, sunk to rest!

Stranger, their humble graves adorn;
You too may fall, and ask a tear;
'Tis not the beauty of the morn
That proves the evening shall be clear.—

They saw their injured country's woe;
The flaming town, the wasted field;
Then rushed to meet the insulting foe;
They took the spear—but left the shield.

Led by thy conquering genius, Greene,
The Britons they compelled to fly;
None distant viewed the fatal plain,
None grieved, in such a cause to die—

But, like the Parthian, famed of old,
Who, flying, still their arrows threw,
These routed Britons, full as bold,
Retreated, and retreating slew.

5 Now rest in peace, our patriot band;
Though far from nature's limits thrown,
We trust they find a happier land,
A brighter sunshine of their own.

10

ARNOLD'S DEPARTURE

(December, 1782)

When first published, this poem bore the title:
"The 10th Ode, Horace's Book of Epodes Imitated.
15 Written in December, 1781, upon the departure of
General Arnold from New-York."

With evil omens from the harbor sails
The ill-fated ship that worthless ARNOLD bears,
20 God of the southern winds, call up thy gales,
And whistle in rude fury round his ears.

With horrid waves insult his vessel's sides,
And may the east wind on a leeward shore
25 Her cables snap, while she in tumult rides,
And shatter into shivers every oar.

And let the north wind to her ruin haste,
With such a rage, as when from mountains
30 high
He rends the tall oak with his weighty blast,
And ruin spreads where'er his forces fly.

May not one friendly star that night be seen;
35 No Moon, attendant, dart one glimmering ray
Nor may she ride on oceans more serene
Than Greece, triumphant, found that stormy
day,

When angry Pallas spent her rage no more
 On vanquish'd Ilium, then in ashes laid,
 But turn'd it on the barque that Ajax⁵ bore,
 Avenging thus her temple, and the maid.

When toss'd upon the vast Atlantic main
 Your groaning ship the southern gales shall
 tear,
 How will your sailors sweat, and you complain
 And meanly howl to Jove, that will not hear!

But if, at last, upon some winding shore
 A prey to hungry cormorants you lie,
 A wanton goat to every stormy power,
 And a fat lamb, in sacrifice, shall die.

**OCCASIONED BY GENERAL
 WASHINGTON'S ARRIVAL IN
 PHILADELPHIA, ON HIS WAY TO
 HIS RESIDENCE IN VIRGINIA**

(December, 1783)

(1783)

In his lifetime Washington had his enemies and detractors, but Freneau, whom Washington dubbed "That rascal, Freneau," was one among many who had some real understanding of his achievement. The fifth line of the thirteenth stanza is usually printed with a typographical error—*whom* for *who*—which Freneau tried hard to correct. (See C. T. Hallenbeck, "A Note for Future Editors of Freneau's Poems," *American Literature*, IV, 391-393, January, 1933.)

The great, unequal conflict past,
 The Briton banished from our shore,
 Peace, heav'n-descended, comes at last,
 And hostile nations rage no more;
 From fields of death the weary swain
 Returning, seeks his native plain.

In every vale she smiles serene,
 Freedom's bright stars more radiant rise,
 New charms she adds to every scene,
 Her brighter sun illumines our skies;
 Remotest realms admiring stand,
 And hail the *Hero* of our land:

He comes!—the Genius of these lands—
 Fame's thousand tongues his worth confess,

⁵ Ajax the younger ravished Cassandra in the temple of Pallas Athene, who caused him to be drowned on his way back to Greece.

Who conquered with his suffering bands,
 And grew immortal by distress:
 Thus calms succeed the stormy blast,
 And valour is repaid at last.

5

O *Washington!*—thrice glorious name,
 What due rewards can man decree—
 Empires are far below thine aim,
 And sceptres have no charms for thee;
 Virtue alone has your regard,
 And she must be your great reward.

10

Encircled by extorted power,
Monarchs must envy thy *Retreat*,
 Who cast, in some ill-fated hour,
 Their country's freedom at their feet;
 'Twas yours to act a nobler part
 For injured Freedom had thy heart.

15

For ravaged realms and conquered seas
 Rome gave the great imperial prize,
 And, swelled with pride, for feats like these,
 Transferred her heroes to the skies:—
 A brighter scene your deeds display,
 You gain those heights a different way.

20

When *Faction* reared her bristly head,
 And joined with tyrants to destroy,
 Where'er you marched the monster fled,
 Timorous her arrows to employ:
 Hosts caught from you a bolder flame,
 And despots trembled at your name.

25

Ere war's dread horrors ceased to reign,
 What leader could your place supply?—
 Chiefs crowded to the embattled plain,
 Prepar'd to conquer or to die—
 Heroes arose—but none like you
 Could save our lives and freedom too.

35

In swelling verse let kings be read,
 And princes shine in polished prose;
 Without such aid your triumphs spread
 Where'er the convex ocean flows,
 To Indian worlds by seas embraced,
 And Tartar, tyrant of the waste.

40

To Indian worlds by seas embraced,
 And Tartar, tyrant of the waste.

45

Throughout the east you gain applause,
 And soon the *Old World*, taught by you,
 Shall blush to own her barbarous laws,
 Shall learn instruction from the *New*;

50

Monarchs shall hear the humble plea,
Nor urge too far the proud decree.

Despising pomp and vain parade,
At home you stay, while France and Spain
The secret, ardent wish conveyed,
And hailed you to their shores in vain:
In *Vernon's* groves you shun the throne,
Admired by kings, but seen by none.

Your fame, thus spread to distant lands,
May envy's fiercest blasts endure,
Like Egypt's pyramids it stands,
Built on a basis more secure;
Time's latest age shall own in you
The patriot and the statesman too.

Now hurrying from the busy scene,
Where thy *Potowmack's* waters flow,
May'st thou enjoy thy rural reign,
And every earthly blessing know,
Thus HE⁶ who Rome's proud legions swayed,
Returned, and sought his sylvan shade.

Not less in wisdom than in war
Freedom shall still employ your mind,
Slavery shall vanish, wide and far,
'Till not a trace is left behind;
Your counsels not bestowed in vain,
Shall still protect this infant reign.

So, when the bright, all-cheering sun
From our contracted view retires,
Though folly deems his race is run,
On other worlds he lights his fires!
Cold climes beneath his influence glow,
And frozen rivers learn to flow.

O say, thou great, exalted name!
What Muse can boast of equal lays,
Thy worth disdains all vulgar fame,
Transcends the noblest poet's praise,
Art soars, unequal to the flight,
And genius sickens at the height.

For States redeemed—our western reign
Restored by thee to milder sway,
Thy conscious glory shall remain
When this great globe is swept away,
And *all* is lost that pride admires,
And all the pageant scene expires.

⁶ Cincinnati. (Author's note.)

ON THE
EMIGRATION TO AMERICA

AND
PEOPLING THE WESTERN COUNTRY
(1784)

5

To western woods, and lonely plains,
Palemon from the crowd departs,
Where Nature's wildest genius reigns,
To tame the soil, and plant the arts—
What wonders there shall freedom show,
What mighty STATES successive grow!

10

15

From Europe's proud, despotic shores
Hither the stranger takes his way,
And in our new found world explores
A happier soil, a milder sway,
Where no proud despot holds him down,
No slaves insult him with a crown.

20

What charming scenes attract the eye,
On wild Ohio's savage stream!
There Nature resigns, whose works outvie
The boldest pattern art can frame;
There ages past have rolled away,
And forests bloomed but to decay.

25

From these fair plains, these rural seats,
So long concealed, so lately known,
The unsocial Indian far retreats,
To make some other clime his own,
When other streams, less pleasing flow,
And darker forests round him grow.

30

35

Great Sire⁷ of floods! whose varied wave
Through climes and countries takes its way,
To whom creating Nature gave
Ten thousand streams to swell thy sway!
No longer shall *they* useless prove,
Nor idly through the forests rove;

40

Nor longer shall your princely flood
From distant lakes be swelled in vain,
Nor longer through a darksome wood
Advance, unnoticed, to the main,
Far other ends, the heavens decree—
And commerce plans new freights for thee.

45

While virtue warms the generous breast,
There heaven-born freedom shall reside,
Nor shall the voice of war molest,

50

⁷ The Mississippi. (Author's note.)

Nor Europe's all-aspiring pride—
There Reason shall new laws devise,
And order from confusion rise.

Forsaking kings and regal state,
With all their pomp and fancied bliss,
The traveller owns, convinced though late,
No realm so free, so blest as this—
The east is half to slaves consigned,
Where kings and priests enchain the mind.

O come the time, and haste the day,
When man shall man no longer crush,
When Reason shall enforce her sway,
Nor these fair regions raise our blush,
Where still the *African* complains,
And mourns his yet unbroken chains.

Far brighter scenes a future age,
The muse predicts, these States will hail,
Whose genius may the world engage,
Whose deeds may over death prevail,
And happier systems bring to view,
Than all the eastern sages knew.

THE WILD HONEYSUCKLE (1786)

Fair flower, that dost so comely grow,
Hid in this silent, dull retreat,
Untouched thy honied blossoms blow,
Unseen thy little branches greet.
No roving foot shall crush thee here,
No busy hand provoke a tear.

By Nature's self in white arrayed,
She bade thee shun the vulgar eye,
And planted here the guardian shade,
And sent soft waters murmuring by;
Thus quietly thy summer goes,
Thy days declining to repose.

Smit with those charms, that must decay,
I grieve to see your future doom;
They died—nor were those flowers more gay,
The flowers that did in Eden bloom;
Unpitying frosts, and Autumn's power
Shall leave no vestige of this flower.

From morning suns and evening dews
At first thy little being came:

If nothing once, you nothing lose,
For when you die you are the same;
The space between, is but an hour,
The frail duration of a flower.

5

TO AN AUTHOR (1788)

10 Your leaves bound up compact and fair
In neat array at length prepare
To pass their hour on learning's stage,
To meet the surly critic's rage;
The statesman's slight, the smatterer's sneer—
15 Were these, indeed, your only fear,
You might be tranquil and resigned—
What most should touch your fluttering mind
Is that few critics will be found
To sift your works, and deal the wound

20 Thus, when one fleeting year is past
On some bye-shelf *your* book is cast—
Another comes, with *something new*,
And drives you fairly out of view:
25 With some to praise, *but more to blame*,
The mind returns to—whence it came;
And some alive, who *scarce could read*
Will publish satires on the dead.

30 Thrice happy Dryden, who could meet
Some rival bard in every street!
When all were bent on writing well
It was some credit to excel!

35 Thrice happy Dryden, who could find
A *Milbourne* for his sport designed—
And *Pope*, who saw the harmless rage
Of *Dennis* bursting o'er this page,
Might justly spurn the *critic's aim*,
40 Who only helped to swell his fame.

On these bleak climes by Fortune thrown,
Where rigid *Reason* reigns alone,
Where lovely *Fancy* has no sway,
45 Nor magic forms about us play,
Nor nature takes her summer hue,
Tell me, what has the muse to do?

An age employed in edging steel
50 Can no poetic raptures feel;
No solitude's attracting power,
No leisure of the noonday hour,

No shaded stream, no quiet grove
Can this fantastic century move.

The muse of love in no request—
Go—try your fortune with the rest,
One of the nine you should engage,
To meet the follies of the age.

On *one*, we fear, your choice must fall,
The least engaging of them all,
Her visage stern—an angry style—
A clouded brow—malicious smile—
A mind on *murdered victims* placed—
She, only she, can please the taste!

THE INDIAN BURYING GROUND

(1788)

"The North American Indians bury their dead in a sitting posture, decorating the corpse with wampum, the images of birds, quadrupeds, &c: And (if that of a warrior) with bows, arrows, tomahawks and other military weapons" (Freneau's note) William Bartram describes the custom in his *Travels*.

In spite of all the learned have said,
I still my old opinion keep;
The *posture*, that *we* give the dead,
Points out the soul's eternal sleep.

Not so the ancients of these lands—
The Indian, when from life released,
Again is seated with his friends,
And shares again the joyous feast.

His imaged birds, and painted bowl,
And venison, for a journey dressed,
Bespeak the nature of the soul,
Activity, that knows no rest.

His bow, for action ready bent,
And arrows, with a head of stone,
Can only mean that life is spent,
And not the old ideas gone.

Thou, stranger, that shalt come this way,
No fraud upon the dead commit—
Observe the swelling turf, and say
They do not *lie*, but here they *sit*.

Here still a lofty rock remains,
On which the curious eye may trace
(Now wasted, half, by wearing rains)
The fancies of a ruder race.

Here still an aged elm aspires,
Beneath whose far-projecting shade
(And which the shepherd still admires)
The children of the forest played!

There oft a restless Indian queen
(Pale *Shebah*, with her braided hair)
And many a barbarous form is seen
To chide the man that lingers there.

By midnight moons, o'er moistening dews,
In habit for the chase arrayed,
The hunter still the deep pursues,
The hunter and the deer, a shade!⁸

And long shall timorous fancy see
The painted chief, and pointed spear,
And Reason's self shall bow the knee
To shadows and delusions here.

THE REPUBLICAN GENIUS OF EUROPE

(1795)

Emperors and kings! in vain you strive
Your torments to conceal—
The age is come that shakes your thrones,
Tramples in dust despotic crowns,
And bids the spectre fail.

In western worlds the flame began:
From thence to France it flew—
Through Europe, now, it takes its way,
Beams an insufferable day,
And lays all tyrants low.

Genius of France! pursue the chace
Till Reason's laws restore
Man to be Man, in every clime;—
That Being, active, great, sublime
Debas'd in dust no more.

In dreadful pomp he takes his way
O'er ruin'd crowns, demolish'd thrones—
Pale tyrants shrink before his blaze—
Round him terrific lightnings play—
With eyes of fire, he looks them through,
Crushes the vile despotic crew,
And Pride in ruin lays.

⁸ The Scotch poet, Thomas Campbell, borrowed this line and used it in his "O'Connor's Child."

ON A HONEY BEE

DRINKING FROM A GLASS OF WINE AND
DROWNED THEREIN

(1809)

This excellent bit of light verse possibly owes something to Thomas Gray's poem, "On the Death of a Favourite Cat Drowned in a Tub of Goldfishes."

Thou, born to sip the lake or spring,
Or quaff the waters of the stream,
With hither come on vagrant wing?—
Does Bacchus tempting seem—
Did he, for you, this glass prepare?—
Will I admit you to a share?

Did storms harass or foes perplex,
Did wasps or king-birds bring dismay—
Did wars distress, or labors vex,
Or did you miss your way?—
A better seat you could not take
Than on the margin on this lake.

Welcome!—I hail you to my glass:
All welcome, here, you find;

Here let the cloud of trouble pass,
Here, be all care resigned.—
This fluid never fails to please,
And drown the griefs of men or bees.

What forced you here, we cannot know,
And you will scarcely tell—
But cheery we would have you go
And bid a glad farewell.
On lighter wings we bid you fly,
Your dart will now all foes defy.

Yet take not, oh! too deep a drink,
And in this ocean die,
Here bigger bees than you might sink,
Even bees full six feet high.
Like Pharaoh, then, you would be said
To perish in a sea of red.

Do as you please, your will is mine;
Enjoy it without fear—
And your grave will be this glass of wine,
Your epitaph—a tear—
Go, take your seat in Charon's boat,
We'll tell the hive, you died afloat.

III

NATIONALISM
AND
ROMANTICISM

1789 - 1830

NATIONALISM AND ROMANTICISM

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In the upper center on horseback are Lewis and Clark with Sacagawea, the Shoshone "bird woman," guiding them on their westward journey of exploration. At bottom in the center are James Fenimore Cooper and Uncas, hero of *The Last of the Mohicans*. In the lower right-hand corner John James Audubon sketches a wild turkey and Washington Allston, painter and poet, works at his easel. Behind Allston are Charles Brockden Brown, Hugh Henry Brackenridge, and William Dunlap the dramatist. Above this group David Crockett stands face-to-face with an enormous bear.

In the lower left-hand corner are William Cullen Bryant and, below him, Washington Irving writing *Knickerbocker's History of New York*; seated beside him is a figure in Dutch costume. To their right is a Southern singer of Negro folk songs. Above him is Andrew Jackson with one of his Western followers. At the top Francis Scott Key peers at the Star-Spangled Banner. In the distance Conestoga wagons (prairie schooners) are lumbering westward across the plains, where Francis Parkman is pursuing a buffalo. In the distant background are foothills and peaks of the Rocky Mountains.

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... these were in effect the problems that [in 1800] lay before American society: Could it transmute its social power into the higher forms of thought? Could it provide for the moral and intellectual needs of mankind? Could it take permanent political shape? Could it give new life to religion and art? Could it create and maintain in the mass of mankind those habits of mind which had hitherto belonged to men of science alone? Could it physically develop the convolutions of the human brain? Could it produce, or was it compatible with, the differentiation of a higher variety of the human race? Nothing less than this was necessary for its complete success.

—HENRY ADAMS, *History of the United States* (1889-1891), I, 184.

I

The thirteen colonies, with their widely differing traditions, did not become a nation overnight. In fact, until 1865 it was open to question whether the States were in any proper sense of the word a nation. In 1783 the States had no national culture, no national religion, no national system of education, no language exclusively their own, no strong bond of common traditions, no fully developed national point of view toward anything. They did not even have a strong central government. They were not a nation but a confederation of emancipated provinces, an aggregation of geographical sections. In every sphere of thought—with the partial exception of the political—they were still colonially minded. In 1783 men were more likely to refer to themselves as Pennsylvanians or Virginians than as Americans. In the South allegiance to the state continued primary until after the Civil War. In the North it gave way slowly to a feeling that the nation came first and the state and section second. It was long before Americans ceased to say, "The United States *are*," and learned to say, "The United States *is*." The employment of the singular verb, illogical as it may seem, symbolizes an immense change in the American point of view since 1783.

In our own day of disappearing state lines, one is likely to underrate the strength of provincial forces a century and more ago. On January 28, 1813, John Adams wrote to Elbridge Gerry:

"How shall we cure that distemper of the mind, State vanity? You know to what a degree the ancient dominion was infected with it, and how many sacrifices we have

been obliged to make to it. You remember how Pennsylvania had it. Pennsylvania was 'first in arts and arms!' Philadelphia was 'the heart of the Union!' so said George Ross. Dr. Lyman Hall, of Georgia, readily acknowledged that she was the heart, because we know that 'the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.' Now New York is to be placed at the head. Our poor old tame, good-natured pussy Massachusetts, who has the distemper in her heart deeper than any of them, has been obliged to turn and flatter, to dissimulate and to simulate, in plain English, as Governor Hopkins once said, or rather was accused of saying, to coax, lie, and flatter in order to carry her points, and save herself from perdition."

The strength of sectional prejudice a century ago is today difficult to realize. This is particularly true of New England and the South. In these sections prejudice against the other goes back to the days of William Byrd and Cotton Mather. The few intelligent and open-minded Virginians who visited New England were astonished to discover that they had been misled by sectional prejudice, and the New Englanders who visited Virginia were often greatly pleased with what they saw. While tutoring in Richmond in 1798, William Ellery Channing wrote:

"I blush for my own people, when I compare the selfish prudence of a Yankee with the generous confidence of a Virginian. . . . There is one single trait which attaches me to the people I live with, more than all the virtues of New England. They *love money less* than we do. They are more disinterested. Their patriotism is not tied to their purse-strings. Could I only take away from the Virginians their *sensuality* and their *slaves*, I should think them the greatest people in the world."

Parenthetically, we may add a passage from a letter written from Virginia by A. Bronson Alcott, who in his youth spent four years in the South as a peddler: "Hospitality is a most distinguishing trait of the Virginia people, rich and poor; and their polished manners and agreeable conversation ingratiate the traveller at once in their favor. The planters are an educated class, gentlemen in the best sense of the word."

In 1829 William Wirt, a distinguished Virginia lawyer, went to Boston on business. On August 3 of that year he wrote to his friend, Judge Dabney Carr:

". . . I think the people of Boston amongst the most agreeable in the United States. I suppose their kindness to me may have some effect on my judgment;—but, divesting myself of this, as much as possible, I say they are as warm-hearted, as kind, as frank, as truly hospitable as the Virginians themselves. In truth, they are Virginians in all the essentials of character. They speak and pronounce as we do, and their sentiments are very much in the same strain. Their literary improvement, as a mass, is much superior to ours. I expected to find them cold, shy and suspicious. I found them, on the contrary, open, playful and generous. They have no foreign mixture among them,—but are the native population, the original English and their descendants. . . . —Would to Heaven the people of Virginia and Massachusetts, knew each other better! What a host of absurd and repulsive prejudices would that knowledge put to flight! How would it tend to consolidate the Union, threatened as it is, with so many agents of dissolution . . . What a fool have I been to join in these vulgar prejudices against the Yankees! We judged them by their peddlers. It would be as just if they were to judge us by our black-legs."

II

The first great need was a strong central government that would make American independence secure and provide some machinery for putting into effect the ideals for which the Revolution had been fought. The convention which framed the federal Constitution, displacing the loose and ineffective Articles of Confederation, met in Philadelphia in 1787. With the inauguration of Washington as President in 1789, under the new Constitution, the future of the new nation began to look more nearly secure to Americans. In Europe, however, few expected the Union to endure.

By comparison with the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution is a conservative document. Modern historians have pointed out that the latter was framed by well-to-do men, and have charged that it was framed in the interest of property-holders and in disregard of the principles of the Declaration. Such differences as one finds between the two documents, however, are perhaps to be expected. Jefferson's lyrical generalizations about "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" were all well enough as a war platform, but probably few of the Signers had any intention of admitting the poor, the ignorant, and the enslaved to a share in the government of the nation. When independence had been achieved, the Fathers were no longer young men. John Adams, who had helped draft the Declaration in 1776, was now a conservative with leanings toward the British form of government. After the Revolution the chief fear of statesmen was not King George and the British army but disintegration and mobocracy. Political leaders were in no humor for a further revolution, such as was imminent in France. There was reaction abroad as well as at home. Edmund Burke had in 1775 sympathized with the American Revolution; the Revolution in France aroused him to denounce everything for which it stood.

During Washington's administration the two divergent theories of government which have ever since divided the American people became articulate and were incorporated in political parties. Alexander Hamilton, the leader of the Federalists, and Thomas Jefferson, the founder of the Democratic Republican party, were both members of Washington's cabinet.

Hamilton, partly French by ancestry, was born in the British West Indies. His marriage into the prominent Schuyler family of New York probably had much to do with his social and economic sympathies. He thought the Constitution far from ideal—he would, in fact, have preferred a constitutional monarchy like that of Great Britain—but he was willing to do what he could "to prop the frail and worthless fabric." In the Constitutional Convention he had said:

"Take mankind as they are, and what are they governed by? Their passions. . . . Our prevailing passions are ambition and interest; and it will ever be the duty of a wise government to avail itself of those passions in order to make them subservient to the public good. . . . All communities divide themselves into the few and the many. The first are the rich and well-born; the other the mass of people. . . . turbulent and changing, they seldom judge or determine right. Give therefore to the first class a distinct, permanent share in the Government."

Even today, in spite of Hamilton's great services to the young nation, most Americans find it difficult to forgive him his untactful remark at a New York dinner, in reply to some democratic sentiment, "Your people, sir,—your people is a great *beast!*" It was Hamilton's

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policy to attach to the new government "the rich and well-born"; that was the method by which as Secretary of the Treasury he hoped "to prop the frail and worthless fabric."

Washington's Secretary of State, Thomas Jefferson, was not the vulgar demagogue he was often considered by his political opponents. He came of a good Virginia family, had been well educated, had traveled extensively, and probably knew more of world affairs than any other American of his time. Jefferson had grown up on the Virginia border—what was then the "West"—and the frontier democracy in the midst of which he lived had more to do with his democratic political views than had his years in France. In political matters the cosmopolitan Jefferson was markedly anti-English, even anti-European. "Nothing," he said, "is so important as that America shall separate herself from the systems of Europe, and establish one of her own." In the social sense Jefferson was hardly what we should today call a thoroughgoing democrat; using the term in a political sense, we should call him a democrat in comparison with Hamilton or Adams but not with Andrew Jackson or Abraham Lincoln.

Unlike many of his contemporaries, Jefferson never lost the idealism he had written into the Declaration of Independence. As Governor of Virginia during the Revolution, he had been instrumental in establishing religious freedom, in disestablishing the Anglican Church, and in abolishing the laws of primogeniture and entail which held together the great planter estates of Virginia. In his old age he described the situation which he found when in 1790 he returned from France to take a place in Washington's cabinet:

"I found a state of things, in the general society of the place [Philadelphia], which I could not have supposed possible. . . . The revolution I had left, and that we had just gone through in the recent change of our government, being the common topics of conversation, I was astonished to find the general prevalence of monarchical sentiments, insomuch that in maintaining those of republicanism, I had always the whole company on my hands, never scarcely finding among them a single co-advocate in that argument. . . . The furthest that any one would go, in support of the republican features of our new government, would be to say, 'the present constitution is well as a beginning, and may be allowed a fair trial; but it is, in fact, only a stepping-stone to something better.'"

For a time the Federalists had things much their own way, but after a long and bitter struggle Jefferson succeeded John Adams as President in 1801. At that time many of his followers said, "The Revolution is now complete"; but Jefferson's administration proved to be not at all a radical one. It was left to Andrew Jackson and his combination of Western Democrats and Eastern working-men to bring about in 1829 something nearer the ideal stated in the Declaration of Independence.

Significant though the contrast between the views of Jefferson and those of Hamilton undoubtedly is, one must not make too much of it. Each is a somewhat legendary figure, distorted by political parties for partisan ends. Even in recent years the late Senator Beveridge, in his life of John Marshall, glorified Hamilton at the expense of Jefferson; Claude G. Bowers in *Jefferson and Hamilton* did the exact opposite. The antithesis between the two men was partly sectional. Hamilton represented the mercantile interests of the North, and Jefferson the interests of the Southern planters; and neither merchant nor planter

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wanted democracy carried to an extreme. Much of our political history from 1790 to 1865 turns upon the clash between these two controlling interests.

Jefferson's most memorable achievement as President was the negotiation of the Louisiana Purchase, which practically doubled the territory of the United States. The addition of the vast western domain gave a renewed impetus to the settlement of the West, which had gone on increasingly since the early days of the Revolution. The political influence of the West was not of first importance until the inauguration in 1829 of Andrew Jackson, a product of the frontier in a sense that Jefferson was not.

The inconclusive Second War with England (1812-1815) and the so-called paper war that preceded and followed it confirmed Americans in their determination to adhere to their own system of government and to have as little to do with European politics as possible. The Monroe Doctrine was designed to prevent European nations from forcing an undemocratic system of government on Latin-American countries. The years immediately following 1815 have often been referred to as the Era of Good Feeling. National pride was stronger and more nearly universal than it was to be again until the very close of the century. The rapid growth of the country in area and in population prompted much loose talk of America's "manifest destiny." At times the question of slavery threatened to divide South and North, but the Missouri Compromise of 1820 established a political balance of power that was to endure for a quarter of a century. Jefferson, however, had forebodings, and at the time of the Compromise John Quincy Adams wrote in his diary: "I take it for granted that the present question is a mere preamble—a title-page to a great, tragic volume."

III

The United States was, even in 1830, still predominantly rural and agricultural. The industrial, or economic, revolution, which has since gone far toward changing not only our way of life but also our psychology and national character, was only beginning in this period. New England was becoming a manufacturing section. In addition to shipbuilding, cotton and woolen factories were becoming important industries. Voyages to the Pacific and even to the Far East were not uncommon. The whaling industry, to be memorably portrayed in Melville's *Moby-Dick* (1851), was already a huge enterprise. Henry Clay's "American System," combining internal improvements with a high protective tariff, was an expression of the national desire to be economically as well as politically independent of Europe. New inventions, like the steamboat (the locomotive came somewhat later), made easier the problem of travel and transportation in the sparsely settled country. The opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 facilitated the marketing of western crops and the migration of Easterners to the West; and it stimulated the development of New York as America's greatest seaport. Meanwhile Eli Whitney's invention, the cotton gin, gave a tremendous impulse to the expansion of the Gulf States and, incidentally, increased the demand for slaves.

Political and economic changes were accompanied by important social developments. There was a marked decline in the old aristocracy. The Revolution had ruined many wealthy and cultured families. The leveling tendencies in all the states, even in the South,

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carried the idea of equality over into social and economic matters. In the industrial districts one could see the beginnings of a new class, the plutocracy, which cared more for money than for birth, breeding, or culture. Foreign observers were impressed by widespread vulgarity and ostentation. The tempo of American life was changing throughout the North and West, and the leisurely manner of Colonial days was, outside the South, giving way to the tension that marks the American of today.

In spite of the wide diversity of the states, European observers who visited the country in this period agreed that the American character was something distinct and individual; it was no longer English. In *The English Traveller in America, 1780-1835* (1922), Miss Jane L. Mesick notes some of the American characteristics pointed out by British travelers: "acute sensitiveness to opinion," "self-confidence and independence which were noticed in all classes and ages of people," "a certain conservatism in American ideas, a kind of holding back from that which was new and strange," "the undeniable fondness for titles of all kinds," "the reputation for being a money-loving and money-getting people," "the lack of local attachment," "the greatest kindness," "patience and good humor," a "spirit of equality," reserve toward strangers, and a certain stiffness and lack of ease in American society. The travelers were impressed and often offended by the national vanity. John Bristed, who lived some years in this country, wrote in *The Resources of the United States* (1818):

"The *national vanity* of the United States surpasses that of any other country, not even excepting France. It blazes out every where, and on all occasions—in their conversation, newspapers, pamphlets, speeches, and books. They assume it as a self-evident fact, that the Americans surpass all other nations in virtue, wisdom, valour, liberty, government, and every other excellence. All Europeans they profess to despise, as ignorant paupers and dastardly slaves. Even during President Washington's administration, Congress debated three days upon the important position that 'America was the *most enlightened* nation on earth'; and finally decided the affirmative by a small majority."

The general impression made upon foreign observers was that a large percentage of Americans could read but that few of them read anything but newspapers. The American faith in education was growing and finding expression in the founding of colleges and the promotion of public schools. There was, however, no national university, though George Washington in his will had left a sum to be used toward establishing such an institution. Washington, like many others, feared that Americans who attended European universities would be corrupted by the political opinions of the Old World. The curriculum of even the better colleges was comparable to that of present-day preparatory schools. After the Second War with England we find a few exceptional American students going to German universities, then the best in Europe: George Ticknor, Edward Everett, George Bancroft, and Emerson's older brother William.

IV

The nineteenth century inherited from the eighteenth an idea destined to be peculiarly influential in America: the idea of progress. This concept, unknown to antiquity, was developed in the Age of Enlightenment, which took a hopeful view of the nature and destiny of man. It was a favorite theme of the French *philosophes*, whose writings influ-

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enced Americans, particularly Franklin, Jefferson, and Thomas Paine, all of whom lived for a time in France. Franklin wrote to Joseph Priestley, the discoverer of oxygen, in 1780:

"The rapid Progress *true* Science now makes, occasions my regretting sometimes that I was born so soon. It is impossible to imagine the Height to which may be carried, in a thousand years, the Power of Man over Matter. We may perhaps learn to deprive large Masses of their Gravity, and give them absolute Levity, for the sake of easy Transport. Agriculture may diminish its Labour and double its Produce; all Diseases may by sure means be prevented or cured, not excepting even that of Old Age, and our Lives lengthened at pleasure even beyond the antediluvian Standard. O that moral Science were in as fair a way of Improvement, that Men would cease to be Wolves to one another, and that human Beings would at length learn what they now improperly call Humanity!"

Americans, so foreign observers said, boasted little of their past but much of their country's future. The rapid expansion of the nation in territory, population, and wealth encouraged a belief in the "manifest destiny" of the United States. Progress seemed a law of nature. In the later nineteenth century the Darwinian theory of evolution was to be interpreted optimistically to confirm the belief in continual progress, which lies back of much of the writing of Emerson and Whitman. In the twentieth century the belief in inevitable progress has been badly shaken by financial depressions, two world wars, fear of the atomic bomb, and the decline of western Europe. The pessimism expressed in Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West* was the mood of many American writers in the period between the two world wars.

The idea of progress was intimately related to the concept of civilization, which was formulated by Condorcet shortly before his death during the French Revolution. Condorcet rejected the traditional notion that history moves in circles or cycles and saw the future as a new epoch set in motion in part by the American Revolution. He knew the writings of Jefferson and Paine, and his own work was quickly known in this country. (See Charles and Mary Beard, *The American Spirit: A Study of the Idea of Civilization in the United States*, 1942.)

To Americans there was something new and different in the civilization of the United States. They felt that America had inherited the best which the Old World had created and had left behind in Europe institutions and customs not suited to the future. With its vast resources and its new philosophy of government, they felt, the United States represented fundamentally a higher order of civilization. Our British critics naturally ridiculed the notion that a country which had not thus far produced great writers, thinkers, artists, or scientists should set itself up as superior to an "effete" Europe, the nursery of civilization. American writers, however, in the main believed that our civilization represented an irreparable break with the European past and held out the best hope of the world for the future. Even those Americans who visited Europe returned with a stronger conviction of the intrinsic worth of the American civilization. They were less inclined than our writers of today to see civilization in the United States as primarily an extension of the civilization of western Europe, and they exaggerated the uniqueness of our situation.

v

One finds in America in this period no such fortunate conjunction of economic, social, and cultural forces as have marked the great literary periods of the European world. Men

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with the leisure, intelligence, and training necessary to a full understanding and appreciation of art or literature were a very small minority, and until after the Civil War they were to be found chiefly in the larger cities on the Atlantic seaboard and on scattered Southern plantations. Culturally, the Americans were further behind in 1789 than they had been in 1775. The younger generation had not had adequate educational opportunities; many cultured and well-to-do families had been reduced to poverty. Perhaps the greatest loss was that of the Loyalists, many of whom came from the more intelligent classes of the seaboard cities.

The attempt to produce masterpieces of literature and art in a democratic society and to make them carry democratic ideas to the common people was something new in the late eighteenth-century world. From the earliest known times the arts and literature had been associated with royalty and aristocracy or with religious institutions. Although the artist himself was usually not of aristocratic birth, he was dependent for his living upon a prince, a lord, or some high ecclesiastical dignitary. In the nineteenth century, following the American lead, artists in Europe were slowly to exchange their aristocratic patrons for the still uncertain support of the public. In literature this process had gone somewhat further than in music, painting, or sculpture. This was due in large part to the circumstance that books were comparatively cheap and could be reproduced in large numbers. A mechanic could buy a book, but he could not afford to have his portrait done in oils or employ a sculptor to model in marble the head of a favorite child or perhaps even buy a ticket to a concert. If the American achievement in literature somewhat overshadows our accomplishments in the other arts, improvements in the printing and distribution of books are one reason. Another is probably that the English people, from whom we inherit our literary traditions, have always excelled in literature, rarely in the other arts.

This country has established no pensions or patents of nobility for distinguished artists or writers, like Samuel Johnson and Alfred Tennyson. It has, however, given many diplomatic appointments to its writers—Irving was one of the earliest—but such positions are no sinecures. Our state and national governments were slow to employ sculptors and painters to decorate our public buildings. Furthermore, training in the arts is a slow and expensive process, and in the early years of the Republic it seemed necessary for the youthful artist to go to Europe for instruction. In this country art schools and museums were only beginning to come into existence, and there were no fellowships for study abroad. There was little to tempt a successful European artist to try his fortune in America. At the end of the Revolutionary War Benjamin Franklin, then in France, wrote in "Information to Those Who Would Remove to America":

"The Truth is, that though there are in that Country few People so miserable as the Poor in Europe, there are also very few that in Europe would be called Rich; it is rather a general happy Mediocrity that prevails. There are few great Proprietors of the Soil, and few Tenants; most People cultivate their own Lands, or follow some Handicraft or Merchandise; very few [are] rich enough to live idly upon their Rents or Incomes, or to pay the high Prices given in Europe for Paintings, Statues, Architecture, and the other Works of Art, that are more curious than useful. Hence the natural Geniuses, that have arisen in America with such Talents, have uniformly quitted that Country for Europe, where they can be more suitably rewarded."

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In spite of the situation which Franklin describes, there were American artists who remained in this country throughout the Revolution and some who put their democratic sympathies into their artistic product. With the rapid increase in wealth and population of this country, artists have slowly been able to make for themselves a place in American society and gradually they learned to use their art to express American ideas and to portray American life.

In some of the fine arts Americans had made a beginning during the Colonial period; but sculpture, apart from the work of wood carvers, hardly existed. When a demand arose for statues of great Americans to adorn public buildings, it was necessary to import European sculptors like Houdon, who supplied Virginia and North Carolina with statues of Washington. A certain prudishness that arose in the late eighteenth century combined with a Puritan hostility to art to handicap the artist who wished to represent the nude. Robert E. Pine, who had brought to this country a plaster cast of the Venus de Medici, was not permitted to keep it in a studio where it could be seen. Philadelphia became excited when Nicholas Biddle presented to the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts replicas of some of the famous sculptures in the Louvre. One day in each week the nude figures were ordered draped in muslin so that women visitors would not be shocked. Some Americans professed to be shocked because John Vanderlyn had painted the sleeping Ariadne as nude. On the other hand, Americans did not want their heroes dressed in the prosaic garments they had actually worn; and so Horatio Greenough, commissioned to make a statue of Washington for the Capitol, draped his figure in a Roman toga.

Before the Revolution our painters had excelled in portraiture, and the tradition continued. Early in the nineteenth century the French painter David asked Rembrandt Peale: "How is it that all the great portraits of the English school are by Americans?" Not all were, of course, but Benjamin West was still a leading figure in London, and many Americans studied under him. Among them were Gilbert Stuart, John Trumbull (not to be confused with the poet of the same name), Washington Allston, Charles Willson Peale and his son Rembrandt, Thomas Sully, Edward G. Malbone the miniature painter, William Dunlap the dramatist and historian of American art, and two men now far better known for their inventions: Robert Fulton and Samuel F. B. Morse. On the eve of the Revolution John Singleton Copley, sympathizing with the mother country, had left Boston to go to England. About the same time Charles Willson Peale, born in Maryland, left England, where he was studying art, to recross the Atlantic and share his country's fate. His best-known work is his fourteen portraits of George Washington. The most famous portraits of Washington are of course those painted by Gilbert Stuart, who remained in England during the Revolution but returned some years later partly because he wanted to paint the now aged Washington. Artistically, his portraits are perhaps better than Peale's, but Peale's paintings give one a better conception of the great soldier whose skill, fortitude, and patience saw the long war to a victorious conclusion. Another well-known American painter, John Trumbull, once remarked that in this country the artist could not look to the church or to legislative bodies for his support and consequently was "necessarily dependent upon the protection of the rich and great." Trumbull, however, received one of the few important governmental commissions. He was asked to enlarge four of his historical paintings for the rotunda in the Capitol in Washington.

The portrait painters showed little interest in the American landscape, but in the intensely nationalistic period following the second war with Great Britain the so-called Hudson River School undertook to produce pictures in oil comparable to what Irving, Cooper, and Bryant were doing in poetry and prose. The painters were somewhat literary in their tastes, and one of them, Thomas Cole, received a poetic tribute from Bryant. Irving also was interested in painting. He was the friend of Charles Robert Leslie and of Allston, who almost persuaded him to abandon the law for painting, and he chose his pseudonym "Geoffrey Crayon" to indicate his indebtedness to the pictorial art. Other members of the group—if we may call it that—were Thomas Doughty and Asher B. Durand. Their work was to be continued by John Frederick Kensett, Frederick E. Church, and others in the mid-nineteenth century. They painted, however, not only the Hudson River country but also the White Mountains and eventually scenes as remote as the Rocky Mountains and even the Andes. The Hudson River School is now out of fashion and its artistic attainments were never very great, but it did turn the attention of painters to the artistic possibilities of their own country.

The period we are studying was marked by the Greek Revival in architecture. In Revolutionary France and in America it was felt that the simplicity and symmetry of Greek temples harmonized with democratic institutions. Thomas Jefferson, last and greatest of our amateur architects, built Monticello, designed for friends like James Monroe other beautiful houses, and sent from France drawings of the *Maison Carrée* to serve as model for the Virginia state capitol. The published drawings of Andrea Palladio, who had studied Roman and Greek remains, supplied suggestions which builders used again and again. Stately houses with columns and porches began to spring up on Southern plantations, eventually to be mistakenly called Colonial. After Washington had been burned by the British, Charles Bulfinch rebuilt the Capitol, originally designed by William Thornton. Among Bulfinch's pupils were Robert Mills, who built houses in Charleston and designed the Washington Monument in Baltimore and the Treasury Building in Washington, and William Strickland, who designed the Tennessee capitol in Nashville and the Merchants Exchange and the Masonic Temple in Philadelphia.

As time passed and the country grew more prosperous, the taste for fine furniture and art objects increased. When an English admirer presented Washington with a beautiful Italian mantel, the statesman exclaimed: "I greatly fear that it is too elegant and costly for my room and republican style of living," but he became greatly attached to it. A considerable amount of fine furniture was imported from Europe, but the work of native craftsmen was comparable to that of Europeans. American furniture makers used to good effect the printed style books of Chippendale, Hepplewhite, Sheraton, and the brothers Adam. An American designer of great talent was Duncan Phyfe, who made cabinets and other articles for well-to-do Knickerbocker families. After Waterloo put an end to the Napoleonic Wars, the Empire style began to be popular in this country. Toward the middle of the century taste in furniture and architecture notably declined, and it was not until the twentieth century that the general public became aware of the high quality of the work of early American builders and furniture makers.

Until very recently the United States could hardly be described as a musical nation. In 1922 Deems Taylor referred to America with some over-emphasis as a nation which

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spent millions upon an art which it could not produce. In the years 1789-1830 the day of great symphony orchestras and operatic companies was still in the future. Our cities were too few and too far apart and the economic level was too low to encourage musicians to make ambitious plans. There were, however, the beginnings of such things. A French company in New Orleans performed operas not only there but in other Southern cities. In New York Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* was produced in 1819 only six months after London and Paris had seen it; and Portland, Maine, had a Beethoven society in the same year, eight years before the great composer's death. These events were of course exceptional. The masses of the people sang the traditional hymns—a few were now being written by Timothy Dwight and other divines. There was a wealth of English and Scottish ballads and songs still sung in rural communities, but no one yet thought it worth his while to collect them or the Negro spirituals and "sinful songs" sung on Southern plantations. The music teacher seen most frequently was still the itinerant singer of psalms and hymns with his tuning fork. In the churches, however, the prejudice against instrumental music and choir singing was beginning to die out. In another generation Stephen Collins Foster would be composing his "Ethiopian" melodies and Lowell Mason would be writing some of the best of American hymns.

The American theater, which we have neglected to discuss in earlier chapters, had its beginnings early in the eighteenth century. Perhaps the first professional performance was given in Charleston, which has a distinguished theatrical history, in 1703 when Anthony Aston, a strolling English player, put on some plays and "wrote one Play on the Subject of the Country." An important event was the coming in 1752 to Williamsburg, which had a playhouse before 1720, of Lewis Hallam with a group of professionals who played there for eleven months before going on to New York and Philadelphia. Religious opposition from the Quakers and evangelical churches was great, particularly in New England, but it lessened with the passing of time. The first American tragedy, *The Prince of Parthia*, by Thomas Godfrey of Philadelphia, was acted before the Revolution; it was printed in 1765, two years after the poet's death. During the Revolution, although Congress tried to prevent theatrical performances, plays were written and acted by both Tories and patriots. Among the playwrights were Mrs. Mercy Otis Warren, Hugh Henry Brackenridge the novelist, and Robert Munford, a Virginia planter and soldier, whose *The Patriots* is one of the best of our early plays. The first notable American comedy to be produced was Royall Tyler's *The Contrast*, performed in New York in 1787. In this play, which ridicules Americans who ape the British, appears Jonathan, the first of a long line of Yankee comic figures. The success of *The Contrast* stimulated William Dunlap (1766-1839) to write the first of his many plays. One of the best of these, *André*, was produced in 1798. Besides his plays, Dunlap wrote *A History of the American Theatre* (1832), *A History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in the United States* (1834), and *A Life of Charles Brockden Brown* (1815). The nationalist movement affected the drama as it did other forms of literature. The most important of the playwrights who undertook to portray American life was James Nelson Barker (1784-1858), who in *The Indian Princess* (produced and published in 1808) wrote the first of many American plays dealing with the aborigines. Barker's *Superstition*, produced in 1824, deals in part with the regicide story later used by Hawthorne in "The Gray Champion." John Howard Payne (1791-1852) had a varied life as actor

and playwright in both Europe and America but is remembered chiefly as the author of "Home, Sweet Home" (from *Clari*, 1823). The first notable actors in this country were English professionals, but early in the nineteenth century Americans like Payne, James H. Hackett, and Edwin Forrest began to compete on equal terms with their English rivals. One who follows our theatrical history will soon note that our actors have, certainly until the twentieth century, been almost uniformly better than our dramatists. The nineteenth-century theater had a huge repertory of British plays going back to Shakespeare. In the absence of an international copyright law there was nothing to prevent the producer from putting on English or French or German plays without paying any royalty to the author. This situation was to prevail until 1891.

VI

The outlook for American literature in 1789 was not promising. With the exception of Charles Brockden Brown (1771-1810), the important writers of the period were all born after Yorktown. Irving was born in 1783, Cooper in 1789, Bryant in 1794. There was a loud outcry for a national literature, but little other incentive to a literary career. There were not enough persons with leisure, taste, training, and money to constitute a large enough reading public to justify a writer in trying to make a living by his pen. In 1790 there were only six cities with a population of eight thousand or over: Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Charleston, Baltimore, and Salem. With few exceptions, no author, until after the Civil War, was able to live on returns from his writings. Even today there are reputable authors who, like Bryant, cannot make a living from literature. At the beginning of the nineteenth century John Quincy Adams gave up his dream of a literary career as impossible. On Christmas Day, 1820, he wrote in his diary. "Literature has been the charm of my life, and, could I have carved out my own fortunes, to literature would my whole life have been devoted. I have been a lawyer for bread, and a statesman at the call of my country. . . . The summit of my ambition would have been by some great work of literature to have done honor to my age and country, and to have lived in the gratitude of future ages. This consummation of happiness has been denied me." As late as 1825 Thomas Jefferson wrote:—"Literature is not yet a distinct profession with us. Now and then a strong mind arises, and at its intervals of leisure from business, emits a flash of light. But the first object of young societies is bread and covering; science is but secondary and subsequent."

At the close of the Revolution there was no national copyright law. Noah Webster found it necessary to travel to the various states in order to secure from the various legislative bodies legal protection for his books. Even after the adoption of national legislation, there was until 1891 no international copyright law. American publishers naturally preferred to reprint, without payment of royalty, the works of popular British writers. The American author, even when a successful one, found it impossible to prevent British publishers from reprinting his works. The injustice done to British authors like Scott and Byron is obvious, but the effect upon American letters was almost disastrous. No greater handicap could be imagined to the budding literature of the recently emancipated colonies. In this period comes our first great publisher, Matthew Carey (1760-1839), Irish by birth, who was of

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great service in printing American books and periodicals. Yet he, too, took an active part in the pirating of British publications.

Under these conditions it is not surprising that a large proportion of American writing appeared in pamphlets, newspapers, and magazines, and some of the best of it was slow in being republished in book form. In *A History of American Magazines, 1741-1850* (1930), Professor F. L. Mott thus sums up the period from 1794 to 1825:

"A summary of the Period of Nationalism in American magazine history must at least point out the facts that magazines of many kinds greatly increased in number, especially in the twenties; that there was a marked development of class periodicals, notably those devoted to religion; that politics occupied a large share of magazine energy to the detriment of *belles-lettres*; that weekly magazines of all kinds were prominent; that financial success was almost unknown to magazine publishers and editors, and that, in spite of large borrowings from English and other sources, there was a loud and insistent demand for a peculiarly American literature."

Among the more important magazines were: the *North American Review* (1815-1940), in which some of Bryant's best poems first appeared; Joseph Dennie's *Port Folio* (1801-1827); the *Portico* (1816-1818), of Baltimore; and the *Southern Review* (1828-1832), of Charleston. Students who are able to examine a file of some early American magazines will find it more enlightening than reading many pages of discussion at second-hand.

Nearly two centuries after the founding of Jamestown, America had produced little writing of intrinsic literary importance. Franklin's *Autobiography* was our only classic. The Revolution of course had brought a really significant political literature, but in the field of *belles-lettres* there was little that anyone but the special student reads today, little that an intelligent Englishman need read either at that time or this. In 1783 certain important literary types—the novel, the short story, and the drama—were almost non-existent in America.

Down to the end of the nineteenth century one notes a tendency on the part of American literature to lag behind European literary fashions. Irving impressed Hazlitt as a belated eighteenth-century writer. The Romantic Movement had passed its peak in England before the significant work of our New England writers appeared. Our Romantic Movement almost coincides with the Victorian period in England; so that in a sense, as Norman Foerster has pointed out, we have not had anything quite like the literature of Victorian England. In more recent times Bernard Shaw has satirized "the dumbfounding staleness" of American culture in his portrait of Hector Malone in *Man and Superman*. "To this culture," writes Shaw, "he finds English people either totally indifferent, as they commonly are to all culture, or else politely evasive, the truth being that Hector's culture is nothing but a state of saturation with our literary exports of thirty years ago, reimported by him to be unpacked at a moment's notice and hurled at the head of English literature, science and art, at every conversational opportunity."

VII

An important factor in the literary history of the early nineteenth century was the American demand for a national literature. The desire for a literature dealing with the American scene was a perfectly natural one; something like it is found in all countries

and certainly in all sections of America. But there were other reasons why at the close of the Revolutionary War the demand for a national literature was loud and insistent. There was a strong feeling that English literature was undemocratic, not suitable for the training of young Americans. England was now a foreign nation. What was needed was a literature based upon the American idea. There was the feeling that political independence called for independence in all cultural and intellectual matters. The desire for a national literature was accentuated by the hostility of British travelers and reviewers. Before and after the War of 1812—which made Americans more nationalistic in feeling than ever—there was waged what has been called the “paper war” between America and England. Irving’s “English Writers on America” is one of the few things written on the subject that is still remembered. Of all that the British reviewers said about America, practically everything has been forgotten except Sydney Smith’s question, “Who reads an American book?” This question was one of a number which appeared in an article published in the *Edinburgh Review* for January, 1820. After indulging in some restrained praise for the Americans, Smith, who was more friendly than most of our British critics, wrote:

“Thus far, we the friends and admirers of Jonathan: But he must not grow vain and ambitious; or allow himself to be dazzled by that galaxy of epithets by which his orators and newspaper scribblers endeavour to persuade their supporters that they are the greatest, the most refined, the most enlightened, and the most moral people upon earth. The effect of this is unspeakably ludicrous on this side of the Atlantic—and, even on the other, we should imagine, must be rather humiliating to the reasonable part of the population. The Americans are a brave, industrious, and acute people; but they have hitherto given no indications of genius, and made no approaches to the heroic, either in their morality or character. They are but a recent offset indeed from England; and should make it their chief boast, for many generations to come, that they are sprung from the same race with Bacon and Shakespeare and Newton. . . . In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book? Or goes to an American play? Or looks at an American picture or statue? What does the world yet owe to American physicians and surgeons? What new substances have their chemists discovered? Or what old ones have they analysed? What new constellations have been discovered by the telescopes of Americans? What have they done in the mathematics? Who drinks out of American glasses? Or eats from American plates? or wears American coats or gowns? or sleeps in American blankets?—Finally, under which of the old tyrannical governments of Europe is every sixth man a Slave, whom his fellow-creatures may buy and sell and torture?

“When these questions are fairly and favourably answered, their laudatory epithets may be allowed: But, till that can be done, we would seriously advise them to keep clear of superlatives.”

American writers betrayed irritation over the question, “Who reads an American book?” long after 1820. Nearly thirty years later, Lowell, reviewing Longfellow’s *Kavanagh*, said: “The Stamp Act and the Boston Port Bill scarcely produced a greater excitement than the appalling question, *Who reads an American book?*” In *Leaves from My Journal* Lowell refers again to Sydney Smith’s question:

"It had been resolved unanimously that we must and would have a national literature. England, France, Spain, Italy, each already had one, Germany was getting one as fast as possible, and Ireland vowed that she once had one far surpassing them all. To be respectable, we must have one also, and that speedily. . . . Sydney Smith's scornful question, 'Who reads an American book?' tingled in our ears. Surely never was a young nation setting forth jauntily to seek its fortune so dumfounded as Brother Jonathan when John Bull cried gruffly from the roadside, 'Stand, and deliver a national literature!' After fumbling in his pockets, he was obliged to confess that he hadn't one about him at the moment, but vowed he had left a first-rate one home which he would have fetched along—only it was so everlasting heavy."

In 1850 we find Herman Melville predicting the day when men will ask the question, "Who reads a book by an Englishman that is a modern?" The most remarkable reaction to Sydney Smith's question came from John Neal, who tells the story in his *Wandering Recollections of a Somewhat Busy Life*:

"... I happened to be dining with my friend, the late Henry Robinson, of Baltimore, an Englishman by birth and early education—one of the worthiest and most honorable and generous men I ever knew. The conversation turned, I know not how, upon American literature, and he, being full of admiration for the 'Edinburgh' and 'Quarterly,' asked, in the language of the day, 'Who reads an American book?' I know not what I said in reply; but I know how I felt, and that, finally, I told him, 'more in sorrow than in anger,' that I would leave my office, my library, and my law-business, and take passage in the first vessel I could find—we had no regular passage then—and see what might be done, with a fair field, and no favor, by an American writer [in England]. . . ."

Neal actually went to England, spent three years there, and got some articles printed in the British reviews (including five articles on "American Writers"); but he found that the British editors mutilated his articles, which in their published form hurt him in America.

A characteristic expression of the new nationalistic spirit in literature is found in the Prologue to Royall Tyler's *The Contrast*, produced in New York in 1787. The Prologue, from which we quote the opening paragraph, is ascribed to "a Young Gentleman of New-York":

"Exult each patriot heart!—this night is shewn
A piece, which we may fairly call our own;
Where the proud titles of 'My Lord! Your Grace!'
To humble Mr. and plain Sir give place.
Our Author pictures not from foreign climes
The fashions, or the follies of the times;
But has confin'd the subject of his work
To the gay scenes—the circles of New-York.
On native themes his Muse displays her pow'rs;
If ours the faults, the virtues too are ours.
Why should our thoughts to distant countries roam,
When each refinement may be found at home?"

*Who travels now to ape the rich or great,
To deck an equipage and roll in state,
To court the graces, or to dance with ease,
Or by hypocrisy to strive to please?
Our free-born ancestors such arts despis'd;
Genuine sincerity alone they priz'd;
Their minds, with honest emulation fir'd,
To solid good—not ornament—aspir'd;
Or, if ambition rous'd a bolder flame,
Stern virtue throve, where indolence was shame."*

One must not imagine that all American literature was written to convince the countrymen of Sydney Smith that the United States had, or was soon to have, a great national literature; and yet, especially before 1840, some such motive had much to do with a large amount of American writing. An uncritical literary patriotism, however, is not the best incentive to the production of great literature. It was not long before American reviewers were praising books of no importance merely because they were written by Americans and dealt with American life. In the period following 1830 we shall notice a reaction against literary nationalism, particularly in Longfellow and Poe; and yet the demand for a national literature continues to be voiced by such important figures as Emerson and Whitman.

The problem of creating an American literature was a difficult one. The economic handicaps have been mentioned. Another obstacle, seldom mentioned by American writers who discuss the problem, is the technical difficulty of finding suitable artistic means for painting the American landscape, portraying distinctively American characters, or presenting American ideals. The American environment furnished the writer excellent raw materials, but it gave him no technique for handling them. Of necessity he had to learn from English writers how to treat this new material. Bryant learned from Cowper, Southey, and Wordsworth how to picture the American forest and prairie; Cooper and Simms learned from Scott's Highlanders and outlaws how to paint the American Indian and frontiersman. Even in our own century Owen Wister has confessed that he wrote his first story of the West under the influence of Kipling and Stevenson and that the technical method he used was borrowed from a French short story by Prosper Mérimée.¹

The scholarly study of our literary history begins long after the period we are discussing. Our first important literary historian, Moses Coit Tyler, was born in 1835; and his *History of American Literature during the Colonial Period* did not appear until 1878. Nevertheless interest in our literary history was beginning to find some expression. In the preface to his *Lectures on American Literature* (1829), Samuel Knapp wrote: "We have very good histories—narrative, political, military, and constitutional; but I know none, as yet, that can be called literary—meaning by the term, a history of our literature, and of

¹ For further discussion of the subject, see Harry Hayden Clark, "Nationalism in American Literature," *University of Toronto Quarterly*, II, 491-519 (July, 1933); Clarence Gohdes, "The Theme-Song of American Criticism," in the same magazine, VI, 49-65 (October, 1936); G. H. Orans, "The Romance Ferment after *Waverley*," *American Literature*, III, 408-431 (January, 1932); Benjamin Spencer's two articles: "A National Literature, 1837-1855," *American Literature*, VIII, 125-159 (May, 1936), and "A National Literature: Post-Civil War Decade," *Modern Language Quarterly*, IV, 71-86 (March, 1913).

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our literary men; and probably it will be a long time before we shall have such an one as we ought to have."

Knapp's book was certainly not the ideal literary history. In the same year Samuel Kettell published one of the first important anthologies, *Specimens of American Poetry*. Of the great difficulties which he met in his "attempt to do something for the cause of American literature," he says:

"When it is considered, that nothing similar to this enterprise has ever before been attempted, the reader must be aware of the laborious nature of the researches to be made. The whole collection of American literature was to be explored minutely without guide or direction, and the difficulty of such a task can be estimated only by those who have attempted something similar. There was no where, as I remarked, even a tolerably accurate list of American authors. Their works were scattered as diversely as the leaves of the Sybil, and many of them were about as easily to be procured. We have no collection of them in public libraries, and some had become so completely forgotten that I was indebted in many cases to accident for their discovery."

VIII

The years 1789-1830 correspond roughly to the great period in English literature which marks the triumph of the Romantic Movement. Between 1798, the year of *Lyrical Ballads*, and 1832, the year in which Scott and Goethe died, appeared practically all of the important work of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Lamb, Hazlitt, and others. Their influence on American writers is important throughout the first half of the nineteenth century and even beyond. This is of course not the place for a discussion of their work, but it should be emphasized that American writers were often indebted to their British contemporaries and predecessors. American literature was then, if not now, still in some respects a part of English literature; and it cannot be thoroughly understood without studying it in its relation to the literature of the older country—and often to the literatures of other European countries.

There have been various attempts to define the word *Romanticism*, none of them wholly successful, for the movement took various forms in the many writers of the different countries of Europe. The French have often defined Romanticism as *lyrisme* because the subjective, or lyric, note is a common one. There is something of this quality to be seen in some of the English Romanticists, notably Byron, who in the words of Matthew Arnold, bore through Europe "the pageant of his bleeding heart." In Germany the most striking aspect of the Romantic Movement is the revival of the Middle Ages, which in England is best seen in the Waverley Novels. But there is little of the subjective in Scott, and Wordsworth had little interest in the Middle Ages. All of the English Romantic poets, however, celebrated the beauties of external nature. Perhaps no specific and all-inclusive definition of Romanticism can ever be framed. There are, however, some suggestive attempts at definition which are worth noting. In *The Age of Wordsworth* C. H. Herford maintains that in England Romanticism was primarily "an extraordinary development of imaginative sensibility." Other suggestive phrases are "the return to Nature," "the renaissance of wonder," and "the revival of romance." In their *History of English Litera-*

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ture William Vaughn Moody and Robert Morss Lovett sum up Romanticism thus: "It is essentially the emphasis upon the individual effort to escape from the world of conventions and social control. There are two great avenues of such escape—external nature and the imagination." On one side Romanticism represents a revolt against Neo-classicism, especially as exemplified by Alexander Pope and Samuel Johnson. It has of course a close relation with the forces that led to the American Revolution and the French Revolution. A usable summary is given in the late Ashley H. Thorndike's *Literature in a Changing Age*. Under six heads—not all parallel—he indicates the chief interests of the English Romantic writers: 1. External Nature, 2. Humble Life, 3. The Revival of the Past, 4. The Temper of Revolt, 5. Supernaturalism, and 6. Subjectivity. In American literature three of these characteristics are less important than in English literature: The Revival of the Past, The Temper of Revolt, and Supernaturalism. The American past was brief and none too picturesque, and what was there to revolt from in the land of liberty? The first two characteristics in Thorndike's list, however, bulk large. The beauties of American scenery are celebrated in the poems of Bryant, the novels of Cooper, and the essays and stories of Irving. Humble life is idealized in Longfellow's "The Village Blacksmith" and *Evangeline*, and in the novels of Cooper and Simms. Romanticism prompted an increased interest in the American past; but Hawthorne and Cooper, who both dealt with it successfully, came to the conclusion that American history furnished almost nothing comparable to the rich materials which Scott had found in the past of England and Scotland. In a later period we shall find Romanticism taking in New England the unusual form of Transcendentalism.

IX

During the Revolutionary period the Southern colonies, notably Virginia, had been the scene of some remarkable political writing. There was more of what might be classed as *belles-lettres* than is generally supposed, but the culture of the South did not usually express itself in literature. In this respect the South runs true to the type of culture which it represented: country gentlemen have rarely been conspicuous for either the production or the patronage of literature. In *The Travelling Bachelor* Cooper comments on the gentlemen of the South:

"I am of opinion, that in proportion to the population, there are more men who belong to what is termed the class of gentlemen, in the old southern States of America than in any other country in the world. So far as pride in themselves, a courteous air, and a general intelligence, are concerned, they are, perhaps quite on a level with the gentry of any other country, though their intelligence must necessarily be chiefly of that sort which is obtained by the use of books, rather than of extensive familiarity with the world. In respect to conventional manners, they are not so generally finished as the upper classes of other countries, or even of some classes in their own; though I do not know where to find gentlemen of better air or better breeding throughout, than most of those I have met in the southern Atlantic States."

New England, which is to play the leading role in the next period (1830-1870), was in the first quarter of the nineteenth century intellectually not altogether awake—except for the Connecticut Wits. In 1852 Emerson wrote in his journal: ". . . from 1790 to 1820,

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there was not a book, a speech, a conversation, or a thought in the State [Massachusetts]. About 1820, the Channing, Webster, and Everett era begun, and we have been bookish and poetical and cogitative since." Henry Adams wrote in his *History of the United States*: "Between New England and the Middle States was a gap like that between Scotland and England. The conceptions of life were different. In New England society was organized on a system,—a [Congregational] clergy in alliance with a magistracy; universities supporting each, and supported in turn,—a social hierarchy, in which respectability, education, property, and religion united to crush the unwise and vicious."

The democratic ideal of the Revolution had not yet appealed to New England as strongly as to other sections. In his *New England in the Republic* James Truslow Adams writes:

"The Congregational clergy, occupying a privileged position and vested interests, were the natural allies of the rich and conservative elements in New England. The backbone of the Federalist party was made up of the merchant-lawyer-capitalist group, the clergy, and the local magnates, who in the small villages and towns, had been accustomed to position and a political influence similar to those of the country gentry in England. John Adams always saw clearly the many social and economic conflicts of interest in New England society, which for long escaped the more modern historians of that section. 'The state of Connecticut,' he wrote in 1808, 'has always been governed by an aristocracy, more decisively than the empire of Great Britain is. Half a dozen, or, at most, a dozen families, have controlled that country when a colony, as well as since it has been a state. An aristocracy can govern the elections of the people without hereditary legal dignities, privileges, and powers, better than with them. . . .'"

Fisher Ames, a witty New England Federalist, thought that genuine democracy would lead to revolution. "Our country," he said, "is too big for union, too sordid for patriotism, too democratical for liberty. What is to become of it, He who made it best knows."

Even in Massachusetts there was nothing like the widespread interest in literature and culture which is so notable a characteristic of the following period. Josiah Quincy, President of Harvard College, wrote of the state of literature in the Andover, Massachusetts, Academy about 1815, when he was a student there:

"English literature was presented in the sober guise of 'Vincent's Explanations of the Westminster Catechism,' and 'Mason on Self-Knowledge,' and from each of these books we were required to recite once a week. The sole work of imagination tolerated by the authorities was the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' There was, nevertheless, an awful rumor, only to be mentioned under one's breath, that Dr. Porter, professor of rhetoric in the divinity schools, had upon his shelves the writings of a person called William Shakespeare, a play-actor, whose literary productions were far from edifying."

To New England belongs that indefatigable compiler of dictionaries and spelling-books, Noah Webster (1758-1843), a neighbor of the Hartford Wits. Federalist though he was, Webster wrote in 1790: "A fundamental mistake of the Americans has been, that they considered the revolution as completed, when it was but just begun. . . . This country is independent in government; but totally dependent in manners, which are the basis of government." Believing that no purer English was spoken anywhere than in his native New England, he had written the preceding year in his *Dissertations on the English Lan-*

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guage: "As an independent nation, our honor requires us to have a system of our own, in language as in government. Great Britain, whose children we are, and whose language we speak, should no longer be *our* standard; for the taste of her writers is already corrupted, and her language on the decline. But if it were not so, she is at too great a distance to be our model, and to instruct us in the principles of our tongue." Since Webster's day American writers have employed the English language with less deference to British usage—to the displeasure of many English visitors—and with more of an eye to its American resources.

In this period Philadelphia was—until New York superseded it—our chief literary center. The French traveler, Brissot de Warville, wrote of the city as he saw it in 1788. "Philadelphia may be considered as the metropolis of the United States. It is certainly the finest town, and the best built; it is the most wealthy, though not the most luxurious. You find here more men of information, more political and literary knowledge, and more learned societies." By 1820 New York had become the most important literary center. Irving, however, was the only important writer who was a native of that city.

The literary contribution of the West in this period (1789-1830) was not large, nor was it to prove large until after the Civil War. Until that time the writings of Westerners have much the same sort of interest as those of the Colonial writers; their interest for us is historical, social, and cultural, for few of them have any intrinsic literary importance. (See Ralph L. Rusk, *The Literature of the Middle Western Frontier*, 1925.) One finds some reflection of the great West in the writings of Easterners—notably in Bryant's "The Prairies," Irving's *A Tour on the Prairies*, and Cooper's *The Prairie*.

The first American novel, *The Power of Sympathy*, appeared in 1789, the year in which Washington was inaugurated as President. This novel, long ascribed to a Boston poetess, Sarah Wentworth Morton, is now believed to have been written by William Hill Brown. (See Milton Ellis, "The Author of the First American Novel," *American Literature*, IV, 359-368, January, 1933). A more popular novel was Mrs. Susannah Rowson's *Charlotte* (1790), later entitled *Charlotte Temple*; this was one of numerous tales of seduction reminiscent of Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe*. Much more important are the novels of Charles Brockden Brown, who owes much to William Godwin and the English Gothic novelists. After the publication of *Waverley* in 1814, the chief debt of American novelists is to Scott. The demand for a native literature frequently took the form of a demand for American historical romances. (See G. Harrison Orians, "The Romance Ferment after *Waverley*," *American Literature*, III, 408-431, January, 1932.) Deeply indebted though American writers of fiction were to British models, Cooper and Irving showed their originality by creating distinctively American characters and by vividly portraying scenes which had no counterpart in the Old World. It was in this period that America for the first time—if we except Franklin—produced men of letters whose work was important enough to command the attention of cultivated Europeans. There was certainly no need for any American to feel ashamed of Irving, Cooper, and Bryant, who wrote books that still have some interest for readers of the twentieth century.

WILLIAM BARTRAM

1739 - 1823

William Bartram was the son of the botanist, John Bartram; both were natives of Philadelphia. During the years 1773-1777 William Bartram explored the southeastern part of the United States. His *Travels* was not published until 1791. The text of the selection given below is from the 1793 edition, published at Dublin. The *Travels* made a strong impression upon European Romantic writers, especially Wordsworth, Coleridge (see J. L. Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu*), and Chateaubriand. The *Travels* was reprinted by Macy-Masius in 1928, with an introduction by Mark Van Doren. There is a biographical and critical study of Bartram by N. B. Fagin (1933). The selection given below is from Part II, Chapter V. The river mentioned in the first sentence is the St. John's River in Florida.

[An Adventure with Alligators]

from TRAVELS THROUGH NORTH
AND SOUTH CAROLINA, GEORGIA,
EAST AND WEST FLORIDA - - -

(1791)

- - - The little lake, which is an expansion of the river, now appeared in view; on the east side are extensive marshes, and on the other, high forests and orange groves, and then a bay, lined with vast cypress swamps, both coasts gradually approaching each other, to the opening river again, which is in this place about three hundred yards wide. Evening now drawing on, I was anxious to reach some high bank of the river, where I intended to lodge; and agreeably to my wishes, I soon after discovered on the west shore a little promontory, at the turning of the river, contracting it here to about one hundred and fifty yards in width. This promontory is a peninsula, containing about three acres of high

ground, and is one entire orange grove, with a few live oaks, magnolias and palms. Upon doubling the point, I arrived at the landing, which is a circular harbour, at the foot of the bluff, the top of which is about twelve feet high; the back of it is a large cypress swamp, that spreads each way, the right wing forming the west coast of the little lake, and the left stretching up the river many miles, and encompassing a vast space of low grassy marshes. From this promontory, looking eastward across the river, I beheld a landscape of low country, unparalleled as I think; on the left is the east coast of the little lake, which I had just passed; and from the orange bluff at the lower end, the high forests begin, and increase in breadth from the shore of the lake, making a circular sweep to the right, and contain many hundred thousand acres of meadow; and this grand sweep of high forests encircles, as I apprehend, at least twenty miles of these green fields, interspersed with hommocks or islets of ever-

green trees, where the sovereign magnolia and lordly palm stand conspicuous. The islets are highly shelly knolls, on the sides of creeks or branches of the river, which wind about and drain off the superabundant waters that cover these meadows during the winter season.

The evening was temperately cool and calm. The crocodiles began to roar and appear in uncommon numbers along the shores and in the river. I fixed my camp in an open plain, near the utmost projection of the promontory, under the shelter of a large live oak, which stood on the highest part of the ground, and but a few yards from my boat. From this open, high situation, I had a free prospect of the river, which was a matter of no trivial consideration to me, having good reason to dread the subtle attacks of the alligators, who were crowding about my harbour. Having collected a good quantity of wood for the purpose of keeping up a light and smoke during the night, I began to think of preparing my supper, when, upon examining my stores, I found but a scanty provision. I thereupon determined, as the most expeditious way of supplying my necessities, to take my bob and try for some trout. About one hundred yards above my harbour began a cove or bay of the river, out of which opened a large lagoon. The mouth or entrance from the river to it was narrow, but the waters soon after spread and formed a little lake, extending into the marshes: its entrance and shores within I observed to be verged with floating lawns of the pistia and nymphaea and other aquatic plants; these I knew were excellent haunts for trout.

The verges and islets of the lagoon were elegantly embellished with flowering plants and shrubs; the laughing coots with wings half spread were tripping over the little coves and hiding themselves in the tufts of grass; young broods of the painted summer teal, skimming the still surface of the waters, and following the watchful parent unconscious of danger, were frequently surprised by the voracious trout; and he, in turn, as often by the subtle greedy alligator. Behold him rushing forth from the flags and reeds. His enormous body swells. His plaited tail brandished high, floats upon the lake. The waters like a cataract descend from his opening jaws. Clouds of smoke issue from his dilated nostrils. The earth trembles with his thunder. When immediately from the opposite coast of the lagoon,

emerges from the deep his rival champion. They suddenly dart upon each other. The boiling surface of the lake marks their rapid course, and a terrific conflict commences. They now sink to the bottom folded together in horrid wreaths. The water becomes thick and discoloured. Again they rise, their jaws clap together, re-echoing through the deep surrounding forests. Again they sink, when the contest ends at the muddy bottom of the lake, and the vanquished makes a hazardous escape, hiding himself in the muddy turbulent waters and sedge on a distant shore. The proud victor exulting returns to the place of action. The shores and forests resound his dreadful roar, together with the triumphing shouts of these plaited tribes around, witnesses of the horrid combat.

My apprehensions were highly alarmed after being a spectator of so dreadful a battle. It was obvious that every delay would but tend to increase my dangers and difficulties, as the sun was near setting, and the alligators gathered around my harbour from all quarters. From these considerations I concluded to be expeditious in my trip to the lagoon, in order to take some fish. Not thinking it prudent to take my fusée with me, lest I might lose it overboard in case of a battle, which I had every reason to dread before my return, I therefore furnished myself with a club for my defence, went on board, and penetrating the first line of those which surrounded my harbour, they gave way; but being pursued by several very large ones. I kept strictly on the watch, and paddled with all my might towards the entrance of the lagoon, hoping to be sheltered there from the multitude of my assailants; but ere I had half-way reached the place, I was attacked on all sides, several endeavouring to upset the canoe. My situation now became precarious to the last degree: two very large ones attacked me closely, at the same instant, rushing up with their heads and part of their bodies above the water, roaring terribly and belching floods of water over me. They struck their jaws together so close to my ears, as almost to stun me, and I expected every moment to be dragged out of the boat and instantly devoured. But I applied my weapons so effectually about me, though at random, that I was so successful as to beat them off a little; when, finding that they designed to renew the battle, I made for the shore, as the only means left me for my preservation; for, by keeping close

to it, I should have my enemies on one side of me only, whereas I was before surrounded by them; and there was a probability, if pushed to the last extremity, of saving myself, by jumping out of the canoe on shore, as it is easy to outwalk them on land, although comparatively as swift as lightning in the water. I found this last expedient alone could fully answer my expectations, for as soon as I gained the shore, they drew off and kept aloof. This was a happy relief, as my confidence was, in some degree, recovered by it. On recollecting myself, I discovered that I had almost reached the entrance of the lagoon, and determined to venture in, if possible, to take a few fish, and then return to my harbour, while daylight continued; for I could now, with caution and resolution, make my way with safety along shore; and indeed there was no other way to regain my camp, without leaving my boat and making my retreat through the marshes and reeds, which, if I could even effect, would have been in a manner throwing myself away, for then there would have been no hopes of ever recovering my bark, and returning in safety to any settlements of men. I accordingly proceeded, and made good my entrance into the lagoon, though not without opposition from the alligators, who formed a line across the entrance, but did not pursue me into it, nor was I molested by any there though there were some very large ones in a cove at the upper end. I soon caught more trout than I had present occasion for, and the air was too hot and sultry to admit of their being kept for many hours, even though salted or barbecued. I now prepared for my return to camp, which I succeeded in with but little trouble, by keeping close to the shore; yet I was opposed up re-entering the river out of the lagoon, and pursued near to my landing (though not closely attacked), particularly by an old daring one, about twelve feet in length, who kept close after me; and when I stepped on shore and turned about, in order to draw up my canoe, he rushed up near my feet, and lay there for some time, looking me in the face, his head and shoulders out of water. I resolved he should pay for his temerity, and having a heavy load in my fusee, I ran to my camp, and returning with my piece, found him with his foot on the gunwale of the boat, in search of fish. On my coming up he withdrew sullenly and slowly into the water, but soon returned and placed himself in his former position,

looking at me, and seeming neither fearful nor any way disturbed. I soon dispatched him by lodging the contents of my gun in his head, and then proceeded to cleanse and prepare my fish for supper; and accordingly took them out of the boat, laid them down on the sand close to the water, and began to scale them; when, raising my head, I saw before me, through the clear water, the head and shoulders of a very large alligator, moving slowly towards me. I instantly stepped back, when, with a sweep of his tail, he brushed off several of my fish. It was certainly most providential that I looked up at that instant, as the monster would probably, in less than a minute, have seized and dragged me into the river. This incredible boldness of the animal disturbed me greatly, supposing there could now be no reasonable safety for me during the night, but by keeping continually on the watch: I therefore, as soon as I had prepared the fish, proceeded to secure myself and effects in the best manner I could. In the first place, I hauled my bark upon the shore, almost clear out of the water, to prevent their oversetting or sinking her; after this, every moveable was taken out and carried to my camp, which was but a few yards off, then ranging some dry wood in such order as was the most convenient. I cleared the ground round about it, that there might be no impediment in my way, in case of an attack in the night, either from the water or the land; for I discovered by this time, that this small isthmus, from its remote situation and fruitfulness, was resorted to by bears and wolves. Having prepared myself in the best manner I could, I charged my gun and proceeded to reconnoitre my camp and the adjacent grounds; when I discovered that the peninsula and grove, at a distance of about two hundred yards from my encampment, on the land side, were invested by a cypress swamp, covered with water, which below was joined to the shore of the little lake, and above to the marshes surrounding the lagoon; so that I was confined to an islet exceedingly circumscribed, and I found there was no other retreat for me, in case of an attack, but by either ascending one of the large oaks, or pushing off with my boat.

It was by this time dusk, and the alligators had nearly ceased their roar, when I was again alarmed by a tumultuous noise that seemed to be in my harbour, and therefore engaged my immediate attention. Returning to my camp, I

found it undisturbed, and then continued on to the extreme point of the promontory, where I saw a scene, new and surprising, which at first threw my senses into such a tumult, that it was some time before I could comprehend what was the matter; however, I soon accounted for the prodigious assemblage of crocodiles at this place, which exceeded every thing of the kind I had ever heard of.

How shall I express myself so as to convey an adequate idea of it to the reader, and at the same time avoid raising suspicions of my veracity. Should I say, that the river (in this place) from shore to shore, and perhaps near half a mile above and below me, appeared to be one solid bank of fish, of various kinds, pushing through this narrow pass of St. Juan's into the little lake, on their return down the river, and that the alligators were in such incredible numbers, and so close together from shore to shore, that it would have been easy to have walked across on their heads, had the animals been harmless? What expressions can sufficiently declare the shocking scene that for some minutes continued, whilst this mighty army of fish were forcing the pass? During this attempt, thousands, I may say hundreds of thousands of them were caught and swallowed by the devouring alligators. I have seen an alligator take up out of the water several great fish at a time, and just squeeze them betwixt his jaws, while the tails of the great trout flapped about his eyes and lips, ere he had swallowed them. The horrid noise of their closing jaws, their plunging amidst the broken banks of fish, and rising with their prey some feet upright above the water, the floods of water and blood rushing out of their mouths, and the clouds of vapour issuing from their wide nostrils, were truly frightful. This scene continued at intervals during the night, as the fish came to the pass.

After this sight, shocking and tremendous as it was, I found myself somewhat easier and more reconciled to my situation; being convinced that their extraordinary assemblage here was owing to this annual feast of fish; and that they were so well employed in their own element, that I had little occasion to fear their paying me a visit.

It being now almost night, I returned to my camp, where I had left my fish broiling, and my kettle of rice stewing; and having with me oil, pepper, and salt, and excellent oranges hanging in abundance over my head (a valuable substitute for vinegar) I sat down and regaled myself cheerfully. Having finished my repast, I rekindled my fire for light, and whilst I was revising the notes of my past day's journey, I was suddenly roused with a noise behind me toward the main land I sprang up on my feet, and listening, I distinctly heard some creature wading in the water of the isthmus. I seized my gun, and went cautiously from my camp, directing my steps towards the noise: when I had advanced about thirty yards, I halted behind a copice of orange trees, and soon perceived two very large bears, which had made their way through the water, and had landed in the grove, about one hundred yards distance from me, and were advancing towards me. I waited until they were within thirty yards of me: they there began to snuff and look towards my camp: I snapped my piece, but it flashed, on which they both turned about and galloped off, plunging through the water and swamp, never halting, as I suppose, until they reached fast land, as I could hear them leaping and plunging a long time. They did not presume to return again, nor was I molested by any other creature, except being occasionally awakened by the whooping of owls, screaming of bitterns, or the wood-rats running amongst the leaves. - - -

HUGH HENRY BRACKENRIDGE

1748 - 1816

So Modern Chivalry, which is our first back-country book, is the result of using classic European literary traditions in an attempt to impart "seasonable lessons" to the tousel-headed frontier democracy.

—C. M. NEWLIN, *The Life and Writings of Hugh Henry Brackenridge* (1932), p. 116.

Brackenridge, a classmate of Freneau at Princeton and co-author with him of "The Rising Glory of America," was born in Scotland but came to America at the age of five. His activities were various. He taught school. He founded the *United States Magazine* in 1779, only to see it die the year following. He moved to Pittsburgh, then on the frontier, where he long practiced law, writing verse as well as prose in his leisure hours. In 1799 he became a justice of the supreme court of Pennsylvania. Brackenridge was a Jeffersonian Democrat, but he had no love for demagoguery, stupidity, or the tendency of democracy to erase all distinctions of culture and talent. His picaresque romance or satire, *Modern Chivalry: Containing the Adventures of Captain Farrago and Teague O'Regan*, owes much to Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, Samuel Butler's *Hudibras*, and perhaps to Jonathan Swift's *A Tale of a Tub*. Volumes I and II were published in 1792, Volume III in 1793, and Volume IV in 1797. In 1819 appeared a revised edition of the whole. There is an excellent biography by C. M. Newlin (1932), who has also edited the best edition (1937) of *Modern Chivalry*.

from MODERN CHIVALRY, Part I
(1792)

Chapter I. *The Hero*¹ *Is Introduced*
to the Reader. - - -

Captain John Farrago was a man about forty-five years of age, of good natural sense and considerable reading; but in some things whimsical,

owing perhaps to his greater knowledge of books, than of the world; but in some degree, also, to his having never married, being what we call an old bachelor; a characteristic of which is, usually,

¹ In Chapter XIV of Part I Brackenridge says of Captain Farrago: "The captain was a good man, but unacquainted with the world. His ideas were drawn chiefly from what may be called the old school; the Greek and Roman notions of things."

singularity and whim. He had the advantage of having had in early life an academic education; but having never applied himself to any of the learned professions, he had lived the greater part of his life near a village of western Pennsylvania, on a small farm, which he cultivated with servants,² or hired hands, as he could conveniently supply himself with either. He was himself no idler, for he often held his own plough, or swung his flail, while his hands were embrowned by exposure to the sun, and hardened by the use of the axe. In person he was tall, and what is called raw-boned; his features were strongly marked, and rather coarse but not disagreeable, although his nose somewhat exceeded the usual length. The servant he had at this time was an Irishman, whose name was Teague O'Regan. I shall say nothing at present of the character of this man, because the very name imports what he was.

A strange idea came into the head of the captain about this time, for, by the by, I had forgot to mention that having been a captain of a company of militia, he had gone by the name of captain ever since; for the rule is, once a captain, always a captain; but, as I was observing, the idea had come into his head, to saddle an old horse that he had, and ride about the world a little, with his man Teague at his heels, to see how things were going on here and there, and to observe human nature. For it is a mistake to suppose, that a man cannot learn man by reading him in a corner, as well as on the widest space of transaction. At any rate, it may yield amusement. He accordingly sold off his personal effects, pocketed some cash, and leased out his small farm near the village, retaining only the old saddle-horse, which had been for some time relieved from the ordinary services in the plough or wagon. - - -

Chapter III. *The Election—The Captain Dissuades a Weaver from Being a Candidate, but Is Near Losing Teague, Whom the Voters Wish to Take up in His Place.*

At an early hour, our knight-errant and his squire set out on their way, and soon arrived at a place of cross-roads, at a public house and store, where a number of people were convened, for the

² Redemptioners or those bound for a term, to pay for their passage, were called *servants*. (Author's note.)

purpose of electing persons to represent them in the legislature of the state. This was not the annual election, but to fill an occasional vacancy. There was a weaver who was a candidate, and seemed to have a good deal of interest among the people. But another, who was a man of education, was his competitor. Relying on some talent of speaking which he thought he possessed, and getting on the stump of a large oak tree for the convenience of a more elevated position, he thus addressed the people.

"Fellow citizens," said he, "I pretend not to any great abilities; but am conscious to myself that I have the best good will to serve you. But it is very astonishing to me, that this man should conceive himself qualified for the trust. For though my acquirements are not great, yet his are still less. The business which he pursues, must necessarily take up so much of his time, that he cannot apply himself to political studies. I should therefore think it would be more answerable to your dignity, and conducive to your interest, to be represented by a man at least of some letters, than by an illiterate man like this. It will be more honourable for himself, to remain at his loom and knot threads, than to come forward in a legislative capacity; because in the one case, he is in the sphere suited to his education; in the other, he is like a fish out of water, and must struggle for breath in a new element. It is not because he is a weaver that I object to him, but because he is nothing but a weaver, and entirely destitute of the qualifications necessary to fill the office to which he aspires. The occupation a man pursues for a livelihood is but a secondary consideration, if any consideration at all. Warriors and statesmen, and sages, may be found at the plough, and the work bench, but this man has not the slightest pretensions beyond the mysteries of his trade.

"Is it possible that he can understand the affairs of government, whose mind has been entirely concentrated to the small object of weaving webs; to the price by the yard, the grist of the thread, and such like matters as concern the manufacture of clothes? The feet of him who weaves, are more occupied than the head, or at least as much; and therefore he must be, at least, but in half, accustomed to exercise his mental powers. For these reasons, all other things set aside, the chance is in my favour, with respect to information. However, you will decide, and

give your suffrages to him or to me, as you shall judge expedient."

The captain hearing these observations, and looking at the weaver, made free to subjoin something in support of what had been just said. Said he, "I have no prejudice against a weaver more than another man. Nor do I know any harm in the trade; save that from the sedentary life in a damp place, there is usually a paleness of the countenance: but this is a physical, not a moral evil. Such usually occupy subterranean apartments, not for the purpose, like Demosthenes, of shaving their heads and writing over eight times the history of Thucydides, and perfecting a style of oratory; but rather to keep the thread moist; or because this is considered but as an inglorious sort of trade, and is frequently thrust away into cellars, and damp out-houses, which are not occupied for a better use.

"But to rise from the cellar to the senate house, would be an unnatural hoist for one whose mind had not been prepared for it by a previous course of study or training, either self-instructed, and gifted with superior intellect, or having the good fortune to have received an education, with also the advantage of actual experience in public affairs. To come from counting threads, and adjusting them to the splits of a reed, to regulate the finances of a government, would be preposterous; there being no congruity in the case. There is no analogy between knotting threads and framing laws. It would be a reversion of the order of things. Not that a manufacturer of linen or woollen, or other stuffs, is an inferior character, but a different one, from that which ought to be employed in affairs of state. It is unnecessary to enlarge on this subject; for you must all be convinced of the truth and propriety of what I say. But if you will give me leave to take the manufacturer aside a little, I think I can explain to him my ideas on the subject; and very probably prevail with him to withdraw his pretensions." The people seeming to acquiesce, and beckoning to the weaver, they withdrew aside, and the captain addressed him in the following words:

"Mr. Traddle," said he, "I have not the smallest idea of wounding your feelings, but it would seem to me, it would be more your interest to pursue your occupation, than to launch out into that of which you have no knowledge. When you go to the senate house, the application to you will not be to warp a web; but to make laws for

the commonwealth. Now, suppose that making these laws requires a knowledge of commerce, of finance, and of the infinite variety of subjects embraced by the laws, civil or criminal, what service could you render? It is possible you might think justly; but could you speak? You are not in the habit of public speaking. You are not furnished with those commonplace ideas, with which even very ignorant men can pass for knowing something. There is nothing makes a man so ridiculous, as to attempt what is beyond his capacity. You are no tumbler for instance; yet should you give out that you could vault upon a man's back; or turn heels over head like the wheels of a cart; the stiffness of your joints would encumber you; and you would fall to the ground. Such a squash as that, would do you damage. The getting up to ride on the state is an unsafe thing to those who are not accustomed to such horsemanship. It is a disagreeable thing for a man to be laughed at, and there is no way of keeping one's self from it but by avoiding all affectation." These observations did not seem to make much impression on the weaver, who argued that common sense was often better than learning.

While they were thus discoursing, a bustle had taken place among the crowd. Teague hearing so much about elections, and serving the government, took it into his head, that he could be a legislator himself. The thing was not displeasing to the people, who seemed to favour his pretensions; owing, in some degree, to there being several of his countrymen among the crowd; but more especially to the fluctuation of the popular mind, and a disposition to what is new and ignoble. For though the weaver was not the most elevated object of choice, yet he was still preferable to this tatter-demalion.

The captain coming up, and finding what was on the carpet, was chagrined at not having been able to give the voters a better idea of the importance of a legislative trust; alarmed also, from an apprehension of the loss of his servant. Under these impressions he resumed his address to the people. Said he, "That is making the matter still worse, gentlemen: this servant of mine is but a bog-trotter, who can scarcely speak the dialect in which your laws ought to be written; but certainly has never read a single treatise on any political subject; for the truth is, he cannot read at all. The young people of the lower class, in

Ireland, have seldom the advantage of a good education: especially the descendants of the ancient Irish, who have most of them a great assurance of countenance, but little information or literature. This young man, whose family name is O'Regan, has been my servant for several years; and, except a too great fondness for whiskey, which now and then brings him into scrapes, he has demeaned himself in a manner tolerable enough. But he is totally ignorant of the great principles of legislation; and more especially the particular interests of the government. A free government is a noble acquisition to a people: and this freedom consists in an equal right to make laws, and to have the benefit of the laws when made. Though doubtless, in such a government, the lowest citizen may become chief magistrate; yet it is sufficient to possess the right, not absolutely necessary to exercise it. Or even if you should think proper, now and then, to show your privilege, and exert, in a signal manner, the democratic prerogative, yet is it not descending too low to filch away from me a servant whom I cannot well spare, and for whom I have paid my money? You are surely carrying the matter too far, in thinking to make a senator of this hostler; to take him away from an employment to which he has been bred, and put him to another, to which he has served no apprenticeship: to set those hands, which have lately been employed in currying my horse, to the draughting bills, and preparing business for the house."

The people were tenacious of their choice, and insisted on giving Teague their suffrages; and by the frown upon their brows, seemed to indicate resentment at what had been said; as indirectly charging them with want of judgment; or calling in question their privilege to do what they thought proper. "It is a very strange thing," said one of them, who was a speaker for the rest, "that after having conquered Burgoyne and Cornwallis, and got a government of our own, we cannot put in whom we please. This young man may be your servant, or another man's servant; but if we choose to make him a delegate, what is that to you? He may not be yet skilled in the matter, but there is a good day coming. We will empower him; and it is better to trust a plain man like him, than one of your high-flyers, that will make laws to suit their own purposes."

"I had much rather," said the captain, "you

would send the weaver, though I thought that improper, than to invade my household, and thus take from me the person who is employed to curry my horse, and black my boots."

The prolocutor of the people gave him to understand that his objections were useless, for the people had determined on the choice, and Teague they would have, for a representative.

Finding it answered no end to expostulate, he requested to speak a word with Teague by himself. Stepping aside, he said to him, composing his voice, and addressing him in a soft manner: "Teague, you are quite wrong in this matter they have put into your head. Do you know what it is to be a member of a deliberative body? What qualifications are necessary? Do you understand anything of geography? If a question should be put to make a law to dig a canal in some part of the state, can you describe the bearing of the mountains, and the course of the rivers? Or, if commerce is to be pushed to some new quarter, by the force of regulations, are you competent to decide in such a case? There will be questions of law, and astronomy, on the carpet. How you must gape and stare like a fool, when you come to be asked your opinion on these subjects! Are you acquainted with the principles of finance; with the funding public securities; the ways and means of raising the revenue; providing for the discharge of the public debts, and all other things which respect the economy of the government? Even if you had knowledge, have you a facility of speaking? I would suppose you would have too much pride to go to the house just to stay, ay or no. This is not the fault of your nature, but of your education; having been accustomed to dig turf in your early years, rather than instructing yourself in the classics, or common school books.

"When a man becomes a member of a public body, he is like a raccoon, or other beast that climbs up the fork of a tree; the boys pushing at him with pitchforks, or throwing stones, or shooting at him with arrows; the dogs barking in the meantime. One will find fault with your not speaking; another with your speaking, if you speak at all. They will put you in the newspapers, and ridicule you as a perfect beast. There is what they call the *caricatura*; that is, representing you with a dog's head, or a cat's claw. It is the devil to be exposed to the squibs and crackers of the gazette wits and publications. You know

no more about these matters than a goose; and yet you would undertake rashly, without advice, to enter on the office; nay, contrary to advice. For I would not for a hundred guineas, though I have not the half to spare, that the breed of the O'Regans should come to this; bringing on them a worse stain than stealing sheep. You have nothing but your character, Teague, in a new country to depend upon. Let it never be said, that you quitted an honest livelihood, the taking care of my horse, to follow the new fangled whims of the times, and be a statesman. And, besides, have I not promised to do something clever towards settling you in life hereafter, provided you will serve me faithfully in my travels? Some-

thing better than you have thought of may turn up in the course of our rambles."

Teague was moved chiefly with the last part of the address, and consented to relinquish his pretensions.

The captain, glad of this, took him back to the people, and announced his disposition to decline the honour which they had intended him.

Teague acknowledged that he had changed his mind, and was willing to remain in a private station.

The people did not seem well pleased; but as nothing more could be said about the matter, they turned their attention to the weaver, and gave him their suffrages.

CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN

1771 - 1810

Brown's place in American literature is a minor one, but it is secure. . . . In passion, in the ugly realism of powerful scenes, in speculative pathology, in pictures of Indian life, and in analysis of motives that stir men's souls, Brown made a distinctive contribution to American literature.

—DAVID LEE CLARK, Introduction to *Edgar Huntly*, p. xx.

Brown, who is at once the first important American novelist and our first professional man of letters, was born of Quaker stock in Philadelphia on January 17, 1771. The frail and precocious boy obtained the better part of his education from the excellent school of Robert Proud. As a boy, his ambition was to write an American epic. In this ambition he reminds one of the Hartford Wits, one of whom, Dr. Elihu Hubbard Smith, was Brown's friend. It was through Smith that he became acquainted with a congenial group in New York, one of whom was William Dunlap, the dramatist and Brown's first biographer. Most of Brown's novels were written in New York. The best of these are *Wieland* (1798), *Ormond* (1799), *Edgar Huntly* (1799), and *Arthur Mervyn* (1799-1800). All these were rapidly written during the four years he spent in New York and while he was editing a magazine as well. In 1801 he returned to Philadelphia, where until his death from tuberculosis in 1810 he combined business with magazine editing, neither of which seems to have been profitable.

Brown, like his contemporaries, was eager to help create an American literature dealing with native subjects. The Preface to *Edgar Huntly* reveals this purpose clearly. The difficulties in the way of the American author are tellingly set forth by the discouraged Brown in an article, "A Sketch of American Literature for 1806-7," which he published in his magazine, the *American Register or General Repository of History, Politics, and Science*:

"When the American student has completed a laborious work, he carries it to the bookseller [publisher], and offers it for sale. He puts a price upon it somewhat equivalent to the time employed in writing it, but the offer is very properly and prudently rejected by the bookseller, for, says he, here have I a choice of books from England, the popularity and sale of which is fixed and certain, and which will cost me nothing but the mere expences of publication; whereas, from you I must purchase the privilege of printing what I may, after all, be unable to dispose of, and which therefore may saddle me with the double loss of the original price and the subsequent expences. If the disappointed author abates in his demand, and even finally is willing to make a present of his work to the publisher, the uncertainty of the sale still remains, and renders the project a hazardous and precarious one. His reluctance increases in proportion as it is extensive and voluminous. This will probably be found to be the true cause why original works are so rare in America."

Brown's work, like that of many of our early writers, cannot be fully understood without an acquaintance with the English literature of the time. His romances belong in a general way to the Gothic school. Brown, however, chose other means of inspiring terror than the medieval background and exploded superstitions of Horace Walpole and Mrs. Radcliffe. To quote David Lee Clark again: ". . . 'Wieland' deals with insanity, ventriloquism, spontaneous combustion, and religious fanaticism; 'Arthur Mervyn' with the ravages of yellow fever and the vicious lust for wealth; 'Ormond' with poverty, plagues, and virtue in distress; 'Edgar Huntly' with insanity, Indian outrages, somnambulism, and family feuds. . . ." In his realistic use of detail Brown reminds one of Defoe and of Poe, whom he may have influenced. His novels show in some measure the influence of William Godwin's *Political Justice* (1793) and *Caleb Williams* (1794). They were read and praised in England by Keats, Hazlitt, Lockhart, and Godwin's son-in-law, Shelley, whose "To Constantia Singing" was partly inspired by the memory of Constantia Dudley in *Ormond*. Throughout the nineteenth century Brown always had a few discriminating readers. In recent years his importance has been more definitely recognized.

Brown's friend, William Dunlap the dramatist, issued a biography in 1815. See the sketch by Carl Van Doren in the *D. A. B.*; John Erskine's *Leading American Novelists* (1909); A. H. Quinn, *American Fiction* (1936); Ernest Marchand's Introduction to *Ormond* (1937); and David Lee Clark's Introduction to *Edgar Huntly* (1928). Professor Clark is the author of a forthcoming biography of Brown.

The selections in the text, which are taken from *Edgar Huntly*, illustrate Brown's use of American means of inspiring terror. Clark notes the resemblance of Chapter XVI to Poe's "The Pit and the Pendulum." Fenimore Cooper perhaps owed something to Brown's treatment of the Indians in the succeeding chapters.

from EDGAR HUNTLY (1799)

TO THE PUBLIC

The flattering reception that has been given, by the public, to Arthur Mervyn, has prompted the writer to solicit a continuance of the same favour, and to offer to the world a new performance.

America has opened new views to the naturalist and politician, but has seldom furnished themes to the moral painter.¹ That new springs of action and new motives to curiosity should operate, that the field of investigation, opened to us by our own country, should differ essentially from those which exist in Europe, may be readily conceived. The sources of amusement to the fancy and instruction to the heart, that are peculiar to ourselves, are equally numerous and inexhaustible. It is the purpose of this work to profit by some of these sources; to exhibit a series of adventures, growing out of the condition of our country, and connected with one of the most common and most wonderful diseases or affections of the human frame.

One merit the writer may at least claim: that of calling forth the passions and engaging the sympathy of the reader by means hitherto unemployed by preceding authors. Puerile superstition and exploded manners, Gothic castles and chimeras, are the materials usually employed for this end. The incidents of Indian hostility, and the perils of the Western wilderness, are far more suitable; and for a native of America to overlook these would admit of no apology. These, therefore, are, in part, the ingredients of this tale, and these he has been ambitious of depicting in vivid and faithful colours. The success of his efforts must be estimated by the liberal and candid reader.

C. B. B.

[A Sleepwalker's Adventure Among Indians]

CHAPTER XVI

Here, my friend, thou must permit me to pause. The following incidents are of a kind to which the most ardent invention has never conceived a parallel. Fortune, in her most wayward mood, could scarcely be suspected of an influence

like this. The scene was pregnant with astonishment and horror. I cannot, even now, recall it without reviving the dismay and confusion which I then experienced. - - -

I have said that I slept. My memory assures me of this: it informs me of the previous circumstances of my laying aside my clothes, of placing the light upon a chair within reach of my pillow, of throwing myself upon the bed, and of gazing on the rays of the moon reflected on the wall and almost obscured by those of the candle. I remember my occasional relapses into fits of incoherent fancies, the harbingers of sleep. I remember, as it were, the instant when my thoughts ceased to flow and my senses were arrested by the leaden wand of forgetfulness.

My return to sensation and to consciousness took place in no such tranquil scene. I emerged from oblivion by degrees so slow and so faint, that their succession cannot be marked. When enabled at length to attend to the information which my senses afforded, I was conscious for a time of nothing but existence. It was unaccompanied with lassitude or pain, but I felt disinclined to stretch my limbs or raise my eyelids. My thoughts were wildering and mazy, and, though consciousness was present, it was disconnected with the locomotive or voluntary power.

From this state a transition was speedily effected. I perceived that my posture was supine, and that I lay upon my back. I attempted to open my eyes. The weight that oppressed them was too great for a slight exertion to remove. The exertion which I made cost me a pang more acute than any which I ever experienced. My eyes, however, were opened; but the darkness that environed me was as intense as before.

I attempted to rise, but my limbs were cold, and my joints had almost lost their flexibility. My efforts were repeated, and at length I attained a sitting posture. I was now sensible of pain in my shoulders and back. I was universally in that state to which the frame is reduced by blows of a club, mercilessly and endlessly repeated; my temples throbbed, and my face was covered with clammy and cold drops: but that which threw me into deepest consternation was my inability to see. I turned my head to different quarters; I stretched my eyelids, and exerted every visual energy, but in vain. I was wrapped in the murkiest and most impenetrable gloom.

¹ Painter of manners.

The first effort of reflection was to suggest the belief that I was blind; that disease is known to assail us in a moment and without previous warning. This, surely, was the misfortune that had now befallen me. Some ray, however fleeting and uncertain, could not fail to be discerned, if the power of vision were not utterly extinguished. In what circumstances could I possibly be placed, from which every particle of light should, by other means, be excluded?

This led my thoughts into a new train. I endeavoured to recall the past; but the past was too much in contradiction to the present, and my intellect was too much shattered by external violence, to allow me accurately to review it.

Since my sight availed nothing to the knowledge of my condition, I betook myself to other instruments. The element which I breathed was stagnant and cold. The spot where I lay was rugged and hard. I was neither naked nor clothed: a shirt and trousers composed my dress, and the shoes and stockings, which always accompanied these, were now wanting. What could I infer from this scanty garb, this chilling atmosphere, this stony bed?

I had awakened as from sleep. What was my condition when I fell asleep? Surely it was different from the present. Then I inhabited a lightsome chamber and was stretched upon a down bed; now I was supine upon a rugged surface and immersed in palpable obscurity. Then I was in perfect health; now my frame was covered with bruises and every joint was racked with pain. What dungeon or den had received me, and by whose command was I transported hither?

After various efforts I stood upon my feet. At first I tottered and staggered. I stretched out my hands on all sides, but met only with vacuity. I advanced forward. At the third step my foot moved something which lay upon the ground: I stooped and took it up, and found, on examination, that it was an Indian tomahawk. This incident afforded me no hint from which I might conjecture my state.

Proceeding irresolutely and slowly forward, my hands at length touched a wall. This, like the flooring, was of stone, and was rugged and impenetrable. I followed this wall. An advancing angle occurred at a short distance, which was followed by similar angles. I continued to ex-

plore this clue, till the suspicion occurred that I was merely going round the walls of a vast and irregular apartment.

The utter darkness disabled me from comparing directions and distances. This discovery, therefore, was not made on a sudden, and was still entangled with some doubt. My blood recovered some warmth, and my muscles some elasticity, but in proportion as my sensibility returned, my pains augmented. Overpowered by my fears and my agonies, I desisted from my fruitless search, and sat down, supporting my back against the wall.

My excruciating sensations for a time occupied my attention. These, in combination with other causes, gradually produced a species of delirium. I existed, as it were, in a wakeful dream. With nothing to correct my erroneous perceptions, the images of the past occurred in capricious combinations and vivid hues. Methought I was the victim of some tyrant who had thrust me into a dungeon of his fortress, and left me no power to determine whether he intended I should perish with famine, or linger out a long life in hopeless imprisonment. Whether the day was shut out by insuperable walls, or the darkness that surrounded me was owing to the night and to the smallness of those crannies through which daylight was to be admitted, I conjectured in vain.

Sometimes I imagined myself buried alive. Methought I had fallen into seeming death, and my friends had consigned me to the tomb, from which a resurrection was impossible. That, in such a case, my limbs would have been confined to a coffin, and my coffin to a grave, and that I should instantly have been suffocated, did not occur to destroy my supposition. Neither did this supposition overwhelm me with terror or prompt my efforts at deliverance. My state was full of tumult and confusion, and my attention was incessantly divided between my painful sensations and my feverish dreams.

There is no standard by which time can be measured but the succession of our thoughts and the changes that take place in the external world. From the latter I was totally excluded. The former made the lapse of some hours appear like the tediousness of weeks and months. At length, a new sensation recalled my rambling meditations, and gave substance to my fears. I now felt the cravings of hunger, and perceived that, unless my

deliverance were speedily effected, I must suffer a tedious and lingering death.

I once more tasked my understanding and my senses to discover the nature of my present situation and the means of escape. I listened to catch some sound. I heard an unequal and varying echo, sometimes near and sometimes distant, sometimes dying away and sometimes swelling into loudness. It was unlike any thing I had before heard, but it was evident that it arose from wind sweeping through spacious halls and winding passages. These tokens were incompatible with the result of the examination I had made. If my hands were true, I was immured between walls through which there was no avenue.

I now exerted my voice, and cried as loud as my wasted strength would admit. Its echoes were sent back to me in broken and confused sounds and from above. This effort was casual, but some part of that uncertainty in which I was involved was instantly dispelled by it. In passing through the cavern on the former day, I have mentioned the verge of the pit at which I arrived. To acquaint me as far as was possible with the dimensions of the place, I had hallooed with all my force, knowing that sound is reflected according to the distance and relative positions of the substances from which it is repelled.

The effect produced by my voice on this occasion resembled, with remarkable exactness, the effect which was then produced. Was I, then, shut up in the same cavern? Had I reached the brink of the same precipice and been thrown headlong into that vacuity? Whence else could arise the bruises which I had received, but from my fall? Yet all remembrance of my journey hither was lost. I had determined to explore this cave on the ensuing day, but my memory informed me not that this intention had been carried into effect. Still, it was only possible to conclude that I had come hither on my intended expedition, and had been thrown by another, or had, by some ill chance, fallen, into the pit.

This opinion was conformable to what I had already observed. The pavement and walls were rugged like those of the footing and sides of the cave through which I had formerly passed.

But if this were true, what was the abhorred catastrophe to which I was now reserved? The sides of this pit were inaccessible; human footsteps would never wander into these recesses. My

friends were unapprized of my forlorn state. Here I should continue till wasted by famine. In this grave should I linger out a few days in unspeakable agonies, and then perish forever.

The inroads of hunger were already experienced; and this knowledge of the desperateness of my calamity urged me to frenzy. I had none but capricious and unseen fate to condemn. The author of my distress, and the means he had taken to decoy me hither, were incomprehensible. Surely my senses were fettered or depraved by some spell. I was still asleep, and this was merely a tormenting vision; or madness had seized me, and the darkness that environed and the hunger that afflicted me existed only in my own distempered imagination.

The consolation of these doubts could not last long. Every hour added to the proof that my perceptions were real. My hunger speedily became ferocious. I tore the linen of my shirt between my teeth and swallowed the fragments. I felt a strong propensity to bite the flesh from my arm. My heart overflowed with cruelty, and I pondered on the delight I should experience in rending some living animal to pieces, and drinking its blood and grinding its quivering fibres between my teeth.

This agony had already passed beyond the limits of endurance. I saw that time, instead of bringing respite or relief, would only aggravate my wants, and that my only remaining hope was to die before I should be assaulted by the last extremities of famine. I now recollected that a tomahawk was at hand, and rejoiced in the possession of an instrument by which I could so effectually terminate my sufferings.

I took it in hand, moved its edge over my fingers, and reflected on the force that was required to make it reach my heart. I investigated the spot where it should enter, and strove to fortify myself with resolution to repeat the stroke a second or third time, if the first should prove insufficient. I was sensible that I might fail to inflict a mortal wound, but delighted to consider that the blood which would be made to flow would finally release me, and that meanwhile my pains would be alleviated by swallowing this blood.

You will not wonder that I felt some reluctance to employ so fatal though indispensable a remedy. I once more ruminated on the possibility of rescuing myself by other means. I now reflected

that the upper termination of the wall could not be at an insurmountable distance from the pavement. I had fallen from a height; but if that height had been considerable, instead of being merely bruised, should I not have been dashed into pieces?

Gleams of hope burst anew upon my soul. Was it not possible, I asked, to reach the top of this pit? The sides were rugged and uneven. Would not their projectures and abruptnesses serve me as steps by which strength would fail, and my doom would be irrevocably sealed.

I will not enumerate my laborious efforts, alternations of despondency and confidence, the eager and unwearied scrutiny with which I examined the surface, the attempts which I made, and the failures which, for a time, succeeded each other. A hundred times, when I had ascended some feet from the bottom, I was compelled to relinquish my undertaking by the untenable smoothness of the spaces which remained to be gone over. A hundred times I threw myself, exhausted by fatigue and my pains, on the ground. The consciousness was gradually restored that, till I had attempted every part of the wall, it was absurd to despair, and I again drew my tottering limbs and aching joints to that part of the wall which had not been surveyed.

At length, as I stretched my hand upward, I found somewhat that seemed like a recession in the wall. It was possible that this was the top of the cavity, and this might be the avenue to liberty. My heart leaped with joy, and I proceeded to climb the wall. No undertaking could be conceived more arduous than this. The space between this verge and the floor was nearly smooth. The verge was higher from the bottom than my head. The only means of ascending that were offered me were by my hands, with which I could draw myself upward so as, at length, to maintain my hold with my feet.

My efforts were indefatigable, and at length I placed myself on the verge. When this was accomplished, my strength was nearly gone. Had I not found space enough beyond this brink to stretch myself at length, I should unavoidably have fallen backward into the pit, and all my pains had served no other end than to deepen my despair and hasten my destruction.

What impediments and perils remained to be encountered I could not judge. I was now inclined to forebode the worst. The interval of re-

pose which was necessary to be taken, in order to recruit my strength, would accelerate the ravages of famine, and leave me without the power to proceed.

In this state, I once more consoled myself that an instrument of death was at hand. I had drawn up with me the tomahawk, being sensible that, should this impediment be overcome, others might remain that would prove insuperable. Before I employed it, however, I cast my eyes wildly and languidly around. The darkness was no less intense than in the pit below, and yet two objects were distinctly seen.

They resembled a fixed and obscure flame. They were motionless. Though lustrous themselves, they created no illumination around them. This circumstance, added to others, which reminded me of similar objects noted on former occasions, immediately explained the nature of what I beheld. These were the eyes of a panther.

Thus had I struggled to obtain a post where a savage was lurking and waited only till my efforts should place me within reach of his fangs. The first impulse was to arm myself against this enemy. The desperateness of my condition was, for a moment, forgotten. The weapon which was so lately lifted against my own bosom was now raised to defend my life against the assault of another.

There was no time for deliberation and delay. In a moment he might spring from his station and tear me to pieces. My utmost speed might not enable me to reach him where he sat, but merely to encounter his assault. I did not reflect how far my strength was adequate to save me. All the force that remained was mustered up and exerted in a throw.

No one knows the powers that are latent in his constitution. Called forth by imminent dangers, our efforts frequently exceed our most sanguine belief. Though tottering on the verge of dissolution, and apparently unable to crawl from this spot, a force was exerted in this throw, probably greater than I had ever before exerted. It was resistless and unerring. I aimed at the middle space between those glowing orbs. It penetrated the skull, and the animal fell, struggling and shrieking, on the ground.

My ears quickly informed me when his pangs were at an end. His cries and his convulsions lasted for a moment and then ceased. The effect

of his voice, in these subterranean abodes, was unspeakably rueful.

The abruptness of this incident, and the preternatural exertion of my strength, left me in a state of languor and sinking, from which slowly and with difficulty I recovered. The first suggestion that occurred was to feed upon the carcass of this animal. My hunger had arrived at that pitch where all fastidiousness and scruples are at an end. I crept to the spot. I will not shock you by relating the extremes to which dire necessity had driven me. I review this scene with loathing and horror. Now that it is past I look back upon it as on some hideous dream. The whole appears to be some freak of insanity. No alternative was offered, and hunger was capable of being appeased even by a banquet so detestable.

If this appetite has sometimes subdued the sentiments of nature, and compelled the mother to feed upon the flesh of her offspring, it will not excite amazement that I did not turn from the yet warm blood and reeking fibres of a brute.

One evil was now removed, only to give place to another. The first sensations of fulness had scarcely been felt when my stomach was seized by pangs, whose acuteness exceeded all that I had ever before experienced. I bitterly lamented my inordinate avidity. The excruciations of famine were better than the agonies which this abhorred meal had produced.

Death was now impending with no less proximity and certainty, though in a different form. Death was a sweet relief for my present miseries, and I vehemently longed for its arrival. I stretched myself on the ground. I threw myself into every posture that promised some alleviation of this evil. I rolled along the pavement of the cavern, wholly inattentive to the dangers that environed me. That I did not fall into the pit whence I had just emerged must be ascribed to some miraculous chance.

How long my miseries endured, it is not possible to tell. I cannot even form a plausible conjecture. Judging by the lingering train of my sensations, I should conjecture that some days elapsed in this deplorable condition; but nature could not have so long sustained a conflict like this.

Gradually my pains subsided, and I fell into a deep sleep. I was visited by dreams of a thousand hues. They led me to flowering streams and plentiful banquets, which, though placed within my

view, some power forbade me to approach. From this sleep I recovered to the fruition of solitude and darkness, but my frame was in a state less feeble than before. That which I had eaten had produced temporary distress, but on the whole had been of use. If this food had not been provided for me I should scarcely have avoided death. I had reason, therefore, to congratulate myself on the danger that had lately occurred

I had acted without foresight, and yet no wisdom could have prescribed more salutary measures. The panther was slain, not from a view to the relief of my hunger, but from the self-preserving and involuntary impulse. Had I foreknown the pangs to which my ravenous and bloody meal would give birth, I should have carefully abstained; and yet these pangs were a useful effort of nature to subdue and convert to nourishment the matter I had swallowed.

I was now assailed by the torments of thirst. My invention and my courage were anew bent to obviate this pressing evil. I reflected that there was some recess from this cavern, even from the spot where I now stood. Before, I was doubtful whether in this direction from this pit any avenue could be found; but, since the panther had come hither, there was reason to suppose the existence of some such avenue.

I now likewise attended to a sound, which, from its invariable tenor, denoted somewhat different from the whistling of a gale. It seemed like the murmur of a running stream. I now prepared to go forward and endeavour to move along in that direction in which this sound apparently came.

On either side, and above my head, there was nothing but vacuity. My steps were to be guided by the pavement, which, though unequal and rugged, appeared, on the whole, to ascend. My safety required that I should employ both hands and feet in exploring my way.

I went on thus for a considerable period. The murmur, instead of becoming more distinct, gradually died away. My progress was arrested by fatigue, and I began once more to despond. My exertions produced a perspiration, which, while it augmented my thirst, happily supplied me with imperfect means of appeasing it.

This expedient would, perhaps, have been accidentally suggested; but my ingenuity was assisted by remembering the history of certain English prisoners in Bengal, whom their merci-

less enemy imprisoned in a small room, and some of them preserved themselves alive merely by swallowing the moisture that flowed from their bodies. This experiment I now performed with no less success.

This was slender and transitory consolation. I knew that, wandering at random, I might never reach the outlet of this cavern, or might be disabled, by hunger and fatigue, from going farther than the outlet. The cravings which had lately been satiated would speedily return, and my negligence had cut me off from the resource which had recently been furnished. I thought not till now that a second meal might be indispensable.

To return upon my footsteps to the spot where the dead animal lay was a heartless project. I might thus be placing myself at a hopeless distance from liberty. Besides, my track could not be retraced. I had frequently deviated from a straight direction for the sake of avoiding impediments. All of which I was sensible was, that I was travelling up an irregular acclivity. I hoped some time to reach the summit, but had no reason for adhering to one line of ascent in preference to another.

To remain where I was was manifestly absurd. Whether I mounted or descended, a change of place was mostly likely to benefit me. I resolved to vary my direction, and, instead of ascending, keep along the side of what I accounted a hill. I had gone some hundred feet when the murmur, before described, once more saluted my ear.

This sound, being imagined to proceed from a running stream, could not but light up joy in the heart of one nearly perishing with thirst. I proceeded with new courage. The sound approached no nearer, nor became more distinct; but, as long as it died not away, I was satisfied to listen and to hope.

I was eagerly observant if any the least glimmering of light should visit this recess. At length, on the right hand, a gleam, infinitely faint, caught my attention. It was wavering and unequal. I directed my steps towards it. It became more vivid and permanent. It was of that kind, however, which proceeded from a fire, kindled with dry sticks, and not from the sun. I now heard the crackling of flames.

This sound made me pause, or, at least, to proceed with circumspection. At length the scene opened, and I found myself at the entrance of a cave. I quickly reached a station, when I saw a

fire burning. At first no other object was noted, but it was easy to infer that the fire was kindled by men, and that they who kindled it could be at no great distance.

CHAPTER XVII

Thus was I delivered from my prison, and restored to the enjoyment of the air and the light. Perhaps the chance was almost miraculous that led me to this opening. In any other direction, I might have involved myself in an inextricable maze and rendered my destruction sure; but what now remained to place me in absolute security? Beyond the fire I could see nothing; but, since the smoke rolled rapidly away, it was plain that on the opposite side the cavern was open to the air.

I went forward, but my eyes were fixed upon the fire; presently, in consequence of changing my station, I perceived several feet, and the skirts of blankets. I was somewhat startled at these appearances. The legs were naked, and scored into uncouth figures. The *moccasins* which lay beside them, and which were adorned in a grotesque manner, in addition to other incidents, immediately suggested the suspicion that they were Indians. No spectacle was more adapted than this to excite wonder and alarm. Had some mysterious power snatched me from the earth, and cast me, in a moment, into the heart of the wilderness? Was I still in the vicinity of my parental habitation, or was I thousands of miles distant?

Were these the permanent inhabitants of this region, or were they wanderers and robbers? While in the heart of the mountain, I had entertained a vague belief that I was still within the precincts of Norwalk. This opinion was shaken for a moment by the objects which I now beheld, but it insensibly returned; yet how was this opinion to be reconciled to appearances so strange and uncouth, and what measure did a due regard to my safety enjoin me to take?

I now gained a view of four brawny and terrific figures, stretched upon the ground. They lay parallel to each other, on their left sides; in consequence of which their faces were turned from me. Between each was an interval where lay a musket. Their right hands seemed placed upon the stocks of their guns, as if to seize them on the first moment of alarm.

The aperture through which these objects were

seen was at the back of the cave, and some feet from the ground. It was merely large enough to suffer a human body to pass. It was involved in profound darkness, and there was no danger of being suspected or discovered as long as I maintained silence and kept out of view.

It was easily imagined that these guests would make but a short sojourn in this spot. There was reason to suppose that it was now night, and that, after a short repose, they would start up and resume their journey. It was my first design to remain shrouded in this covert till their departure, and I prepared to endure imprisonment and thirst somewhat longer.

Meanwhile my thoughts were busy in accounting for this spectacle. I need not tell thee that Norwalk is the termination of a sterile and narrow tract which begins in the Indian country. It forms a sort of rugged and rocky vein, and continues upwards of fifty miles. It is crossed in a few places by narrow and intricate paths, by which a communication is maintained between the farms and settlements on the opposite sides of the ridge.

During former Indian wars, this rude surface was sometimes traversed by the Redmen, and they made, by means of it, frequent and destructive inroads into the heart of the English settlements. During the last war, notwithstanding the progress of population, and the multiplied perils of such an expedition, a band of them had once penetrated into Norwalk, and lingered long enough to pillage and murder some of the neighbouring inhabitants.

I have reason to remember that event. My father's house was placed on the verge of this solitude. Eight of these assassins assailed it at the dead of night. My parents and an infant child were murdered in their beds; the house was pillaged, and then burnt to the ground. Happily, myself and my two sisters were abroad upon a visit. The preceding day had been fixed for our return to our father's house; but a storm occurred, which made it dangerous to cross the river, and, by obliging us to defer our journey, rescued us from captivity or death.

Most men are haunted by some species of terror or antipathy, which they are, for the most part, able to trace to some incident which befell them in their early years. You will not be surprised that the fate of my parents, and the sight of the body of one of this savage band, who, in

the pursuit that was made after them, was overtaken and killed, should produce lasting and terrific images in my fancy. I never looked upon them or called up the image of a savage without shuddering.

I knew that, at this time, some hostilities had been committed on the frontier; that a long course of injuries and encroachments had lately exasperated the Indian tribes; that an implacable and exterminating war was generally expected. We imagined ourselves at an inaccessible distance from the danger, but I could not but remember that this persuasion was formerly as strong as at present, and that an expedition which had once succeeded might possibly be attempted again. Here was every token of enmity and bloodshed. Each prostrate figure was furnished with a rifled musket, and a leathern bag tied round his waist, which was, probably, stored with powder and ball.

From these reflections, the sense of my own danger was revived and enforced, but I likewise ruminated on the evils which might impend over others. I should, no doubt, be safe by remaining in this nook; but might not some means be pursued to warn others of their danger? Should they leave this spot without notice of their approach being given to the fearless and pacific tenants of the neighbouring district, they might commit, in a few hours, the most horrid and irreparable devastation.

The alarm could only be diffused in one way. Could I not escape, unperceived, and without alarming the sleepers, from this cavern? The slumber of an Indian is broken by the slightest noise; but, if all noise be precluded, it is commonly profound. It was possible, I conceived, to leave my present post, to descend into the cave, and issue forth without the smallest signal. Their supine posture assured me that they were asleep. Sleep usually comes at their bidding, and if, perchance, they should be wakeful at an unseasonable moment, they always sit upon their haunches, and, leaning their elbows on their knees, consume the tedious hours in smoking. My peril would be great. Accidents which I could not foresee, and over which I had no command, might occur to awaken some one at the moment I was passing the fire. Should I pass in safety, I might issue forth into a wilderness, of which I had no knowledge, where I might wander till I perished with famine, or where my footsteps

might be noted and pursued and overtaken by these implacable foes. These perils were enormous and imminent; but I likewise considered that I might be at no great distance from the habitations of men, and that my escape might rescue them from the most dreadful calamities I determined to make this dangerous experiment without delay.

I came nearer to the aperture, and had, consequently, a larger view of this recess. To my unspeakable dismay, I now caught a glimpse of one seated at the fire. His back was turned towards me, so that I could distinctly survey his gigantic form and fantastic ornaments.

My project was frustrated. This one was probably commissioned to watch and to awaken his companions when a due portion of sleep had been taken. That he would not be unfaithful or remiss in the performance of the part assigned to him was easily predicted. To pass him without exciting his notice (and the entrance could not otherwise be reached) was impossible. Once more I shrank back, and revolved with hopelessness and anguish the necessity to which I was reduced.

This interval of dreary foreboding did not last long. Some motion in him that was seated by the fire attracted my notice. I looked, and beheld him rise from his place and go forth from the cavern. This unexpected incident led my thoughts into a new channel. Could not some advantage be taken of his absence? Could not this opportunity be seized for making my escape? He had left his gun and hatchet on the ground. It was likely, therefore, that he had not gone far, and would speedily return. Might not these weapons be seized, and some provision be thus made against the danger of meeting him without, or of being pursued? Before a resolution could be formed, a new sound saluted my ear. It was a deep groan, succeeded by sobs that seemed struggling for utterance but were vehemently counteracted by the sufferer. This low and bitter lamentation apparently proceeded from some one within the cave. It could not be from one of this swarthy band. It must, then, proceed from a captive, whom they had reserved for torment or servitude, and who had seized the opportunity afforded by the absence of him that watched to give vent to his despair.

I again thrust my head forward, and beheld, lying on the ground, apart from the rest, and bound hand and foot, a young girl. Her dress was

the coarse russet garb of the country, and bespoke her to be some farmer's daughter. Her features denoted the last degree of fear and anguish, and she moved her limbs in such a manner as showed that the ligatures by which she was confined produced, by their tightness, the utmost degree of pain.

My wishes were now bent not only to preserve myself and to frustrate the future attempts of these savages, but likewise to relieve this miserable victim. This could only be done by escaping from the cavern and returning with seasonable aid. The sobs of the girl were likely to rouse the sleepers. My appearance before her would prompt her to testify her surprise by some exclamation or shriek. What could hence be predicted but that the band would start on their feet and level their unerring pieces at my head?

I know not why I was insensible to these dangers. My thirst was rendered by these delays intolerable. It took from me, in some degree, the power of deliberation. The murmurs which had drawn me hither continued still to be heard. Some torrent or cascade could not be far distant from the entrance of the cavern, and it seemed as if one draught of cold water was a luxury cheaply purchased by death itself. This, in addition to considerations more disinterested, and which I have already mentioned, impelled me forward.

The girl's cheek rested on the hard rock, and her eyes were dim with tears. As they were turned towards me, however, I hoped that my movements would be noticed by her gradually and without abruptness. This expectation was fulfilled. I had not advanced many steps before she discovered me. This moment was critical beyond all others in the course of my existence. My life was suspended, as it were, by a spider's thread. All rested on the effect which this discovery should make upon this feeble victim.

I was watchful of the first movement of her eye which should indicate a consciousness of my presence. I labored, by gestures and looks, to deter her from betraying her emotion. My attention was, at the same time, fixed upon the sleepers, and an anxious glance was cast towards the quarter whence the watchful savage might appear.

I stooped and seized the musket and hatchet. The space beyond the fire was, as I expected, open to the air. I issued forth with trembling steps. The sensations inspired by the dangers

which environed me, added to my recent horrors, and the influence of the moon, which had now gained the zenith, and whose lustre dazzled my long-benighted senses, cannot be adequately described.

For a minute, I was unable to distinguish objects. This confusion was speedily corrected, and I found myself on the verge of a steep. Craggy eminences arose on all sides. On the left hand was a space that offered some footing, and hither I turned. A torrent was below me, and this path appeared to lead to it. It quickly appeared in sight, and all foreign cares were, for a time, suspended.

This water fell from the upper regions of the hill, upon a flat projecture which was continued on either side, and on part of which I was now standing. The path was bounded on the left by an inaccessible wall, and on the right terminated, at the distance of two or three feet from the wall, in a precipice. The water was eight or ten paces distant, and no impediment seemed likely to rise between us. I rushed forward with speed. My progress was quickly checked. Close to the falling water, seated on the edge, his back supported by the rock, and his legs hanging over the precipice, I now beheld the savage who left the cave before me. The noise of the cascade and the improbability of interruption, at least from this quarter, had made him inattentive to my motions.

I paused. Along this verge lay the only road by which I could reach the water, and by which I could escape. The passage was completely occupied by this antagonist. To advance towards him, or to remain where I was, would produce the same effect. I should, in either case, be detected. He was unarmed; but his outcries would instantly summon his companions to his aid. I could not hope to overpower him, and pass him in defiance of his opposition. But, if this were effected, pursuit would be instantly commenced. I was unacquainted with the way. The way was unquestionably difficult. My strength was nearly annihilated; I should be overtaken in a moment, or their deficiency in speed would be supplied by the accuracy of their aim. Their bullets, at least, would reach me.

There was one method of removing this impediment. The piece which I held in my hand was cocked. There could be no doubt that it was loaded. A precaution of this kind would never

be omitted by a warrior of this hue. At a greater distance than this, I should not fear to reach the mark. Should I not discharge it, and at the same moment, rush forward to secure the road which my adversary's death would open to me?

Perhaps you will conceive a purpose like this to have argued a sanguinary and murderous disposition. Let it be remembered, however, that I entertained no doubts about the hostile designs of these men. This was sufficiently indicated by their arms, their guise, and the captive who attended them. Let the fate of my parents be, likewise, remembered. I was not certain but that these very men were the assassins of my family, and were those who had reduced me and my sisters to the condition of orphans and dependants. No words can describe the torments of my thirst. Relief to these torments, and safety to my life, were within view. How could I hesitate?

Yet I did hesitate. My aversion to bloodshed was not to be subdued but by the direst necessity I knew, indeed, that the discharge of a musket would only alarm the enemies who remained behind; but I had another and a better weapon in my grasp, I could rive the head of my adversary, and cast him headlong, without any noise which should be heard, into the cavern.

Still I was willing to withdraw, to re-enter the cave, and take shelter in the darksome recesses from which I had emerged. Here I might remain, unsuspected, till these detested guests should depart. The hazards attending my re-entrance were to be boldly encountered, and the torments of unsatisfied thirst were to be patiently endured, rather than imbrue my hands in the blood of my fellowmen. But this expedient would be ineffectual if my retreat should be observed by this savage. Of that I was bound to be incontestably assured. I retreated, therefore, but kept my eye fixed at the same time upon the enemy.

Some ill fate decreed that I should not retreat unobserved. Scarcely had I withdrawn three paces when he started from his seat, and, turning towards me, walked with a quick pace. The shadow of the rock, and the improbability of meeting an enemy here, concealed me for a moment from his observation. I stood still. The slightest motion would have attracted his notice. At present, the narrow space engaged all his vigilance. Cautious footsteps, and attention to

the path, were indispensable to his safety. The respite was momentary, and I employed it in my own defence.

How otherwise could I act? The danger that impended aimed at nothing less than my life. To take the life of another was the only method of averting it. The means were in my hand, and they were used. In an extremity like this, my muscles would have acted almost in defiance of my will.

The stroke was quick as lightning, and the wound mortal and deep. He had not time to descry the author of his fate, but, sinking on the path, expired without a groan. The hatchet buried itself in his breast, and rolled with him to the bottom of the precipice.

Never before had I taken the life of a human creature. On this head I had, indeed, entertained somewhat of religious scruples. These scruples did not forbid me to defend myself, but they made me cautious and reluctant to decide. Though they could not withhold my hand when urged by a necessity like this, they were sufficient to make me look back upon the deed with remorse and dismay.

I did not escape all compunction in the present instance, but the tumult of my feelings was quickly allayed. To quench my thirst was a consideration by which all others were supplanted. I approached the torrent, and not only drank copiously, but laved my head, neck, and arms, in this delicious element.

CHAPTER XVIII

Never was any delight worthy of comparison with the raptures which I then experienced. Life, that was rapidly ebbing, appeared to return upon me with redoubled violence. My languors, my excruciating heat, vanished in a moment, and I felt prepared to undergo the labours of Hercules. Having fully supplied the demands of nature in this respect, I returned to reflection on the circumstances of my situation. The path winding round the hill was now free from all impediments. What remained but to precipitate my flight? I might speedily place myself beyond all danger. I might gain some hospitable shelter, where my fatigues might be repaired by repose,

and my wounds be cured. I might likewise impart to my protectors seasonable information of the enemies who meditated their destruction.

I thought upon the condition of the hapless girl whom I had left in the power of the savages. Was it impossible to rescue her? Might I not relieve her from her bonds, and make her the companion of my flight? The exploit was perilous, but not impracticable. There was something dastardly and ignominious in withdrawing from the danger, and leaving a helpless human being exposed to it. A single minute might suffice to snatch her from death or captivity. The parents might deserve that I should hazard or even sacrifice my life in the cause of their child.

After some fluctuation, I determined to return to the cavern and attempt the rescue of the girl. The success of this project depended on the continuance of their sleep. It was proper to approach with wariness, and to heed the smallest token which might bespeak their condition. I crept along the path, bending my ear forward to catch any sound that might arise. I heard nothing but the half-stifled sobs of the girl.

I entered with the slowest and most anxious circumspection. Every thing was found in its pristine state. The girl noticed my entrance with a mixture of terror and joy. My gestures and looks enjoined upon her silence. I stooped down, and, taking another hatchet, cut asunder the deer-skin throngs by which her wrists and ankles were tied. I then made signs for her to rise and follow me. She willingly complied with my directions; but her benumbed joints and lacerated sinews refused to support her. There was no time to be lost; I therefore lifted her in my arms, and feeble and tottering as I was, proceeded with this burthen along the perilous steep and over a most rugged path.

I hoped that some exertion would enable her to retrieve the use of her limbs. I set her, therefore, on her feet, exhorting her to walk as well as she was able, and promising her my occasional assistance. The poor girl was not deficient in zeal, and presently moved along with light and quick steps. We speedily reached the bottom of the hill. ---

WASHINGTON IRVING

1783 - 1859

I . . . found the author, whom I had loved, repeated in the man. The same playful humor; the same touches of sentiment, the same poetic atmosphere; and . . . the entire absence of all literary jealousy.

—HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

New York City, in which Irving was born on April 3, 1783, was far from being the metropolis of today. A large proportion of its population of less than twenty thousand were descendants of the Dutch settlers. In Irving's lifetime, which extended from the close of the Revolution almost to the Civil War, the city was to grow into the metropolis which Whitman celebrated in *Leaves of Grass*. Irving's father was a Scotch merchant who had married an Englishwoman. Everyone knows the story that George Washington gave his little namesake his blessing when Lizzie, the Scotch nurse, followed the conqueror of Cornwallis into a shop and said, "Please your Honor, here's a bairn was named after you." Irving resembled his mother, and had nothing of the austerity of his Presbyterian father, who is said to have "led his children to believe all pleasures were wicked." The boy's health was delicate, and he had no great amount of schooling (we are told that he wrote compositions for the boys who did his sums), but he was fond of reading books of travel and adventure. The opening paragraphs of "The Author's Account of Himself" prefixed to *The Sketch Book* give us a glimpse of his boyhood:

"I was always fond of visiting new scenes, and observing strange characters and manners. Even when a mere child I began my travels, and made many tours of discovery into foreign parts and unknown regions of my native city, to the frequent alarm of my parents, and the emolument of the town crier. As I grew into boyhood, I extended the range of my observations. My holiday afternoons were spent in rambles about the surrounding country. I made myself familiar with all its places famous in history or fable. I knew every spot where a murder or robbery had been committed, or a ghost seen. I visited the neighboring villages, and added greatly to my stock of knowledge, by noting their habits and customs and conversing with their sages and great men. . . .

"This rambling propensity strengthened with my years. Books of voyages and travels became my passion, and in devouring their contents, I neglected the regular exercises of the school. How wistfully would I wander about the pier-heads in fine weather, and watch the parting ships, bound to distant climes; with what

longing eyes would I gaze after their lessening sails, and waft myself in imagination to the ends of the earth!"

In 1804 Irving, threatened with consumption, started on a two-year visit to Europe. In leisurely fashion he wandered over France, Italy, and England. Everywhere he found Europeans amazingly ignorant of the United States. His association with Washington Allston, whom he met in Rome, tempted him for a time to become a painter. He returned to America in better health and with a greatly widened perspective on the world of literature and art, and also with a keener sense of American provincialism.

Soon after his return to New York in 1806 he was admitted to the bar, although he practiced as little as those other literary lawyers, Lowell, Boker, and Lanier. The following conversation is said to have taken place between the two lawyers, Josiah Ogden Hoffman and Martin Wilkins, who had just examined him and were about to grant him a license to practice:

"Martin, I think he knows a *little* law."

"Make it stronger, Jo, *d*—*d* little."

Hoffman's daughter Matilda, whom Irving loved, died in 1809 in her eighteenth year. Her death made a deep and lasting impression upon Irving. In later life he is said to have proposed marriage to an English girl, Emily Foster; and Irving, had he been willing, might perhaps have married Mary Godwin Shelley, the widow of the poet; but he never married.

Irving's first important literary venture—in collaboration with his older brother William and James Kirke Paulding—was *Salmagundi*, one of the many American imitations of the *Spectator*. Twenty numbers appeared in 1807. The aims of the authors were less didactic than those of Steele and Addison had been. "If we moralize, it shall be seldom," announced the editors; "and, on all occasions, we shall be more solicitous to make our readers laugh than cry; for we are laughing philosophers, and truly of the opinion that wisdom, true wisdom, is a plump, jolly dame, who sits in her arm-chair, laughs right merrily at the farce of life—and takes the world as it goes."

In 1809 appeared Diedrich Knickerbocker's *A History of New York*, one of the three or four of Irving's best books. Although some of the older Dutch families were scandalized by this burlesque history, the book was a great success. Irving's returns on the first edition were about three thousand dollars—and this at a time when few publishers were willing to risk printing the work of any American author. Irving's friend, Henry Brevoort, sent a copy of *Knickerbocker* to Walter Scott, who wrote:

"MY DEAR SIR:

I beg you to accept my best thanks for the uncommon degree of entertainment which I have received from the most excellently jocose history of New York. I am sensible, that as a stranger to American parties and politics, I must lose much of the concealed satire of the piece, but I must own that looking at the simple and obvious meaning only, I have never read any thing so closely resembling the style of Dean Swift, as the annals of Diedrich Knickerbocker. I have been employed these few evenings in reading them aloud to Mrs. S. and two ladies who are our guests, and our sides have been absolutely sore with laughing. I think, too, there are passages, which indicate that the author possesses powers of a different kind, and has some touches which remind me of Sterne. I beg you will have the kindness to let me know when Mr. Irvine [*sic*] takes pen in hand again, for assuredly I shall

expect a very great treat which I may chance never to hear of but through your kindness.

Believe me, Dear Sir,
Your obliged humble servant,
WALTER SCOTT."

ABBOTSFORD, 23d April, 1813.

Irving's unprecedented literary success did not move him to any great exertion. For something over a year (1813-1814) he was the anonymous editor of the *Analectic Magazine*, but he did not like to be tied down to regular writing and he disliked writing unfavorable reviews of books that he could not conscientiously praise.

In 1815 Irving returned to Europe, not suspecting that it would be seventeen years before he saw America again. He was now a member of his brothers' firm, and until its bankruptcy in 1818 he suffered many financial worries. After the failure of the firm, Irving turned seriously to literature as a means of earning his livelihood. The first result was *The Sketch Book* (1819-1820). After declining a place on the American Navy Board, which had been offered him through the influence of Stephen Decatur, Irving wrote to his brother Ebenezer on March 3, 1819:

"I have sent by Capt. Merry of the *Rosalie*, the first number of a work [*The Sketch Book*] which I hope to be able to continue from time to time. . . . It [the place on the Navy Board] would have led to no higher situations, for I am quite unfitted for political life. My talents are merely literary, and all my habits of thinking, reading, &c., have been in a different direction from that required for the active politician. I require much leisure and a mind entirely abstracted from other cares and occupations, if I would write much or write well. . . . If I ever get any solid credit with the public, it must be in the quiet and assiduous operations of my pen, under the mere guidance of fancy or feeling. . . .

". . . Do not, I beseech you, impute my lingering in Europe to any indifference to my own country or my friends. My greatest desire is to make myself worthy of the good-will of my country, and my greatest anticipation of happiness is the return to my friends."

On the same day Irving wrote to Henry Brevoort:

"I have attempted [in *The Sketch Book*] no lofty theme nor sought to look wise and learned, which appears to be very much the fashion among our American writers at present. I have preferred addressing myself to the feeling & fancy of the reader, more than to his judgment. My writings may therefore appear light & trifling in our country of philosophers & politicians—but if they possess merit in the class of literature to which they belong it is all to which I aspire in the work. I seek only to blow a flute of accompaniment in the national concert, and leave others to play the fiddle & French Horn."

When *The Sketch Book* began to appear in installments of four or five sketches, it made something of a sensation in America. Longfellow wrote after Irving's death:

"Every reader has his first book: I mean to say, one book among all others which in early youth first fascinates his imagination, and at once excites and satisfies the desires of his mind. To me, this first book was the *Sketch-Book* of Washington

Irving. I was a school-boy when it was published, and read each succeeding number with ever increasing wonder and delight, spell-bound by its pleasant humor, its melancholy tenderness, its atmosphere of revery,—nay, even by its gray-brown covers, the shaded letters of its titles, and the fair clear type, which seemed an outward symbol of its style.”

When *The Sketch Book* was republished in England, it had a great success in spite of the failure of its first English publisher. John Murray, most famous of British publishers, took it over and republished the *Knickerbocker's History of New York*. He paid Irving £1,000 for his next book, *Bracebridge Hall* (1822) and 1,500 guineas for *Tales of a Traveller* (1824). On October 21, 1828, Irving wrote to Alexander Everett:

“Murray has offered me a thousand pounds a year to conduct a periodical magazine he is about setting up, to be devoted entirely to literature and the arts, without the least mixture of politics or personality, and to pay me liberally besides for any articles I may contribute to it. I have declined, as I do not wish to engage in any undertaking that would oblige me to fix my residence out of America; and, indeed, I am unwilling to shackle myself with any periodical labor. He also offers me a hundred guineas an article for contributions to the *Quarterly*. This is extremely liberal, but, unfortunately, his review has been so hostile to our country, that I cannot think of writing a line for it. Had it been otherwise, I could hardly have resisted such a temptation.”

Irving was now one of the most successful authors in either country. His work had been highly praised in British reviews at the time when Sydney Smith was asking, “Who reads an American book?” Conspicuous among his literary friends were Scott, who thought *The Sketch Book* “positively beautiful”; Thomas Moore, who described Irving as “Not strong as a lion, but delightful as a domestic animal”; Samuel Rogers, the poet, whose breakfasts were attended by many American writers; and the American playwright, John Howard Payne, with whom Irving collaborated. After Irving's death another friend, Thackeray, wrote of him in “*Nil Nisi Bonum*”:

“[Irving] was the first Ambassador whom the New World of Letters sent to the Old. . . . His new country (which some people here might be disposed to regard rather superciliously) could send us, as he showed in his own person, a gentleman, who, though himself born in no very high sphere, was most finished, polished, easy, witty, quiet; and, socially, the equal of the most refined Europeans.”

Although no one expected British authors who chose to live on the continent to explain why they did not return home, Americans were sensitive and wondered if Irving had not lost all patriotic feeling. He found it necessary to explain to his friend Brevoort why he did not at once return to the United States:

“You urge me to return to New York—and say many ask whether I mean to renounce my country? For this last question I have no reply to make—and yet I will make a reply—as far as my precarious and imperfect abilities enable me, I am endeavouring to serve my country. Whatever I have written has been written with the feelings and published as the writing of an American. Is that renouncing my country? How else am I to serve my country—by coming home and begging an office of it: which I should not have the kind of talent or the business habits requisite to fill?—If I can do any good in this world it is with my pen.—I feel that

even with that I can do very little, but if I do that little, and do it as an American I think my exertions ought to guarantee me from so unkind a question as that which you say is generally made."

Before his return to America in 1832, Irving visited Spain. The romantic past of that country appealed to him as strongly as that of England. As a result of a stay in the palace of the Moorish kings in Granada, he wrote *The Alhambra* (1832), to which Prescott the historian referred as a "beautiful Spanish Sketch-Book." He left Spain to become Secretary of the American Legation in London, a position which came to him through the influence of Martin Van Buren. He returned to America in 1832 bearing with him an honorary LL.D. degree from Oxford and the medal of the Royal Society of Literature. His American reception was as cordial and as enthusiastic as one could have asked for.

Irving's best work had now been done. As he once remarked, "The best things of an author are spontaneous—the first pressing of the grape, the after squeezings are not so rich." His interests were now turning away from the short story and the essay to history and biography, chiefly on American subjects. Although he was not the scholarly investigator that Francis Parkman was soon to become, Irving was no unworthy successor to the long line of literary historians which includes Herodotus, Livy, Gibbon, and Macaulay. Irving gathered materials for a history of Cortez's conquest of Mexico; but, hearing that a young Boston historian, William Hickling Prescott, was working on the same subject, with characteristic generosity he gave way to the younger man at a considerable sacrifice to himself.

Back in America, Irving felt more strongly the pressure of public opinion, which practically demanded that an American author concern himself with American themes. On October 28, 1833, he wrote to his brother Peter: "I am, as you know, dammed up by the necessity (or fancied necessity) of producing a work upon American subjects, before I can give vent to the other materials that have been accumulating upon me." It was largely to please the American public that he drew on his diaries for *A Tour on the Prairies* (1835), which, while not equal to *The Sketch Book*, is a competent treatment of new and interesting material.

Irving's last years may be passed over briefly. After ten years in the States, he returned to Madrid in 1842 as Minister to Spain. He was the first of a long line of literary ambassadors, which includes James Russell Lowell, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Bret Harte, William Dean Howells, and Thomas Nelson Page. Irving returned to America in 1846 and spent the remaining thirteen years of his life at Sunnyside, near the Sleepy Hollow that he had made famous. He died in 1859.

Irving's nephew, Pierre M. Irving, published in 1862-1864 a four-volume life, which contains many interesting letters. There are later biographies by Charles Dudley Warner (1881), H. W. Boynton (1901), and George S. Hellman (1925). Stanley T. Williams, who has edited a number of Irving's notebooks, is the author of an admirable biography (1935). See also George S. Hellman (ed.), *Letters of Washington Irving to Henry Brevoort* (1915) and *Letters of Henry Brevoort to Washington Irving* (1916). The standard of Irving's works is the Author's Revised Edition (1846-1861) in forty volumes. A useful volume of selections with an excellent bibliography is Henry A. Pochmann, *Washington Irving: Representative Selections* (1934) in the American Writers Series. There are many editions of *The Sketch Book*. For Irving's relations with his contemporaries, see Van Wyck Brooks, *The World of Washington Irving* (1944).

CRITICAL COMMENTS

His greatest merits, which nothing can abate, are pervasive artistic conscience, admirable and persistent sense of form, and constant devotion to his literary ideals (Barrett Wendell, *A Literary History of America*, 1900, p. 179).

The answer to those who dismiss Irving from American literature as a European man of letters is to point out that he was the first of our writers to furnish us with valuable American folk legends. In *Rip Van Winkle*, for example, he conferred upon the old German tale of the sleeping Friedrich Barbarossa a vividly realized American background, and so transmuted its substance into significant reality. It is now an integral part of our racial memory (Edward J. O'Brien, *The Advance of the American Short Story*, rev. ed., 1931, p. 33).

A gentleman in easy circumstances, he sedulously avoided all his years any thinking on fundamental subjects; a man either timid or cool, he let all the major experiences of life escape him. . . . This elegant writer was a strange enough product for a country and a polity supposedly new (Ludwig Lewisohn, *Expression in America*, 1932, p. 43).

LETTERS

TO MISS MARY FAIRLIE

NEW YORK, May 2, 1807.

I thank you a thousand times for the wish you express that I should write to you. . . . Well. . . . We have toiled through the purgatory of an election, and may the day stand for aye accursed on the Kalendar, for never were poor devils more intolerably beaten and discomfited than my forlorn brethren, the Federalists. What makes me the more outrageous is, that I got fairly drawn into the vortex, and before the third day was expired, I was as deep in mud and politics as ever a moderate gentleman would wish to be; and I drank beer with the multitude; and I talked handbill-fashion with the demagogues, and I shook hands with the mob—whom my heart abhorreth. 'Tis true for the two first days I maintained my coolness and indifference. The first day I merely hunted for whim, character, and absurdity, according to my usual custom; the second day being rainy, I sat in the barroom at the Seventh Ward, and read a volume of *Galatea*, which I found on a shelf; but, before I had got through a hundred pages, I had three or four good Feds sprawling around me on the floor, and another with his eyes half shut, leaning on my

shoulder in the most affectionate manner, and spelling a page of the book as if it had been an electioneering handbill. But the third day—Ah! then came the tug of war. My patriotism all at once blazed forth, and I determined to save my country! Oh, my friend, I have been in such holes and corners; such filthy nooks and filthy corners, sweep offices and oyster cellars! "I have been sworn brother to a leash of drawers, and can drink with any tinker in his own language during my life,"—faugh! I shall not be able to bear the smell of small beer or tobacco for a month to come! . . .

Truly this saving one's country is a nauseous piece of business, and if patriotism is such a dirty virtue—prythee, no more of it. I was almost the whole time at the Seventh Ward—as you know, that is the most fertile ward in mob, riot, and incident, and I do assure you the scene was exquisitely ludicrous. Such haranguing and puffing and strutting among all the little great men of the day. Such shoals of unfledged heroes from the lower wards, who had broke away from their mammas, and run to electioneer with a slice of bread and butter in their hands. Every carriage that drove up disgorged a whole nursery of these pigmy wonders, who all seemed to put on the brow of thought, the air of bustle and

business, and the big talk of general committee men. - - -

TO HENRY BREVOORT

PARIS, RUE RICHELIEU, No. 89

Dec. 11th 1824.

TO PETER IRVING

ABBOTSFORD, *Sept. 1, 1817.*

- - - On Friday, inspite of sullen, gloomy weather, I mounted the top of the mail coach, and rattled off to Selkirk. It rained heavily in the course of the afternoon, and drove me inside. On Saturday morning early I took chaise for Melrose; and on the way stopped at the gate of Abbotsford, and sent in my letter of introduction, with a request to know whether it would be agreeable for Mr. Scott to receive a visit from me in the course of the day. The glorious old minstrel himself came limping to the gate, took me by the hand in a way that made me feel as if we were old friends; in a moment I was seated at his hospitable board among his charming little family, and here have I been ever since. I had intended certainly being back to Edinburgh to-day, (Monday,) but Mr. Scott wishes me to stay until Wednesday, that we may make excursions to Dryburgh Abbey, Yarrow, &c, as the weather has held up and the sun begins to shine. I cannot tell you how truly I have enjoyed the hours I have passed here. They fly by too quick, yet each is loaded with story, incident, or song; and when I consider the world of ideas, images, and impressions that have been crowded upon my mind since I have been here, it seems incredible that I should only have been two days at Abbotsford. I have rambled about the hills with Scott; visited the haunts of Thomas the Rhymer, and other spots rendered classic by border tale and witching song, and have been in a kind of dream or delirium.

As to Scott, I cannot express my delight at his character and manners. He is a sterling golden-hearted old worthy, full of the joyousness of youth, with an imagination continually furnishing forth picture, and a charming simplicity of manner that puts you at ease with him in a moment. It has been a constant source of pleasure to me to remark his deportment towards his family, his neighbors, his domestics, his very dogs and cats; every thing that comes within his influence seems to catch a beam of that sunshine that plays round his heart; but I shall say more of him hereafter, for he is a theme on which I shall love to dwell. - - -

5 MY DEAR BREVOORT--

- - - Lynch¹ seems quite in raptures with the wonders that are breaking upon him. He is just the man to visit a capital like Paris, having had his tastes previously instructed and prepared to relish the delicacies placed before him. I cannot tell you what pleasure I have received from long chats with Lynch about old times & old associates. His animated and descriptive manner has put all New York before me and made me long to be once more there. I do not know whether it be the force of early impressions & associations, or whether it be really well founded, but there is a charm about that little spot of earth, that beautiful city and its environs, that has a perfect spell over my imagination. The bay, the rivers & their wild & woody shores; the haunts of my boyhood, both on land and water, absolutely have a witchery over my mind. I thank God for my having been born in so beautiful a place among such beautiful scenery. I am convinced I owe a vast deal of what is good and pleasant in my nature to the circumstance.

I feel continually indebted to your kindness for the interest you have taken in my affairs and in the success of my works in America. I begin to feel extremely anxious to secure a little income from my literary property; that shall put me beyond the danger of recurring penury; and shall render me independent of the necessity of laboring for the press. I should like to write occasionally for my amusement, and to have the power of throwing my writings either into my portfolio, or into the fire. I enjoy the first conception and first sketchings drawn of my ideas; but the correcting and preparing them for the press is unknown labour, and publishing is detestable.

My last work² has a good run in England, and has been extremely well spoken of by some of the worthies of literature, though it has met with some handling from the press. The fact is I have kept myself so aloof from all clan ship in literature, that I have no allies among the scribblers for the periodical press; and some of them have taken a pique against me for having treated them a little cavalierly in my writings. However, as I

¹ Dominick Lynch, a New York friend.

² *Tales of a Traveller.*

do not read criticisms good or bad, I am out of the reach of attack. If my writings are worth any thing they will out live temporary criticism; if not they are not worth caring about. Some parts of my last work were written rather hastily. Yet I am convinced that a great part of it was written in a freer and happier vein than almost any of my former writings. There was more of an artist like touch about it—though this is not a thing to be appreciated by the many. I fancy much of what I value myself upon in writing, escapes the observation of the great mass of my readers: who are intent more upon the story than the way in which it is told. For my part I consider a story merely as a frame on which to stretch my materials. It is the play of thought, and sentiment and language; the weaving in of characters, lightly yet expressively delineated; the familiar and faithful exhibition of scenes in common life; and the half concealed vein of humour that is often playing through the whole—these are among what I aim at, and upon which I felicitate myself in proportion as I think I succeed. I have preferred adopting a mode of sketches & short tales rather than long works, because I chose to take a line of writing peculiar to myself; rather than fall into the manner or school of any other writer: and there is a constant activity of thought and a nicety of execution required in writings of the kind, more than the world appears to imagine. It is comparatively easy to swell a story to any size when you have once the scheme & the characters in your mind; the mere interest of the story too carries the reader on through pages & pages of careless writing and the author may often be dull for half a volume at a time, if he has some striking scene at the end of it, but in these shorter writings every page must have its merit. The author must be continually piquant—woe to him if he makes an awkward sentence or writes a stupid page: the critics are sure to pounce upon it. Yet if he succeed: the very variety & piquancy of his writings; nay their very brevity; makes them frequently recurred to—and when the mere interest of the story is exhausted, he begins to get credit for his touches of pathos or humour; his points of wit or turns of language. I give these as some of the reasons that have induced me to keep on thus far in the way I had opened for myself—because I find by recent letters from E. I. that you are joining in the oft repeated advice that I should write a novel. I believe the works I have

written will be oftener re-read than any novel of the size that I could have written. It is true other writers have crowded into the same branch of literature, and I now begin to find myself elbowed by men who have followed my footsteps; but at any rate I have had the merit of adopting a line for myself instead of following others.

from KNICKERBOCKER'S HISTORY
OF NEW YORK (1809)*

The *History of New York* is, after Franklin's *Autobiography*, our earliest indisputable classic. Irving's purpose in writing the *History* is made clear by "The Author's Apology," written thirty-nine years after the book appeared. The text of the other selections given here is from the edition of Stanley T. Williams and Tremaine McDowell (1927) in the American Authors Series, based upon the first edition, which is somewhat more racy than the revised edition.

THE AUTHOR'S APOLOGY
(1848)

The following work, in which, at the outset, nothing more was contemplated than a temporary jeu d'esprit, was commenced in company with my brother, the late Peter Irving, Esq. Our idea was to parody a small hand-book which had recently appeared, entitled "A Picture of New-York." Like that, our work was to begin with an historical sketch; to be followed by notices of the customs, manners, and institutions of the city; written in a serio-comic vein, and treating local errors, follies, and abuses with good-humored satire.

To burlesque the pedantic lore displayed in certain American works, our historical sketch was to commence with the creation of the world; and we laid all kinds of works under contribution for trite citations, relevant or irrelevant, to give it the proper air of learned research. Before this crude mass of mock erudition could be digested into form, my brother departed for Europe, and I was left to prosecute the enterprise alone.

I now altered the plan of the work. Discarding all idea of a parody on the *Picture of New-York*, I determined that what had been originally intended as an introductory sketch, should comprise the whole work, and form a comic history of the city. I accordingly moulded the mass of citations and disquisitions into introductory

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chapters forming the first book; but it soon became evident to me that, like Robinson Crusoe with his boat, I had begun on too large a scale, and that, to launch my history successfully, I must reduce its proportions. I accordingly resolved to confine it to the period of the Dutch domination, which, in its rise, progress, and decline, presented that unity of subject required by classic rule. It was a period, also, at that time almost a terra incognita in history. In fact, I was surprised to find how few of my fellow-citizens were aware that New York had ever been called New Amsterdam, or had heard of the names of its early Dutch governors, or cared a straw about their ancient Dutch progenitors.

This, then, broke upon me as the poetic age of our city; poetic from its very obscurity; and open, like the early and obscure days of ancient Rome, to all the embellishments of heroic fiction. I hailed my native city as fortunate above all other American cities, in having an antiquity thus extending back into the regions of doubt and fable; neither did I conceive I was committing any grievous historical sin in helping out the few facts I could collect in this remote and forgotten region with figments of my own brain, or in giving characteristic attributes to the few names connected with it which I might dig up from oblivion.

In this, doubtless, I reasoned like a young and inexperienced writer, besotted with his own fancies; and my presumptuous trespasses into this sacred, though neglected, region of history have met with deserved rebuke from men of soberer minds. It is too late, however, to recall the shaft thus rashly launched. To any one whose sense of fitness it may wound, I can only say with Hamlet,

*Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
That I have shot my arrow o'er the house,
And hurt my brother.*

I will say this in further apology for my work: that if it has taken an unwarrantable liberty with our early provincial history, it has at least turned attention to that history and provoked research. It is only since this work appeared that the forgotten archives of the province have been rummaged, and the facts and personages of the olden time rescued from the dust of oblivion and elevated into whatever importance they may actually possess.

The main object of my work, in fact, had a bearing wide from the sober aim of history, but one which, I trust, will meet with some indulgence from poetic minds. It was to embody the traditions of our city in an amusing form; to illustrate its local humors, customs, and peculiarities; to clothe home scenes and places and familiar names with those imaginative and whimsical associations so seldom met with in our new country, but which live like charms and spells about the cities of the old world, binding the heart of the native inhabitant to his home.

In this I have reason to believe I have in some measure succeeded. Before the appearance of my work the popular traditions of our city were unrecorded; the peculiar and racy customs and usages derived from our Dutch progenitors were unnoticed, or regarded with indifference, or adverted to with a sneer. Now they form a convivial currency, and are brought forward on all occasions; they link our whole community together in good humor and good fellowship; they are the rallying points of home feeling; the seasoning of our civic festivities; the staple of local tales and local pleasantries; and are so harped upon by our writers of popular fiction, that I find myself almost crowded off the legendary ground which I was the first to explore, by the host who have followed in my footsteps.

I dwell on this head because, at the first appearance of my work, its aim and drift were misapprehended by some of the descendants of the Dutch worthies; and because I understand that now and then one may still be found to regard it with a captious eye. The far greater part, however, I have reason to flatter myself, receive my good-humored picturings in the same temper in which they were executed; and when I find, after a lapse of nearly forty years, this haphazard production of my youth still cherished among them; when I find its very name become a "household word," and used to give the home stamp to everything recommended for popular acceptance, such as Knickerbocker societies; Knickerbocker insurance companies; Knickerbocker steamboats; Knickerbocker omnibuses; Knickerbocker bread, and Knickerbocker ice: and when I find New-Yorkers of Dutch descent priding themselves upon being "genuine Knickerbockers," I please myself with the persuasion that I have struck the right chord; that my dealings with the good old Dutch times, and the customs and usages derived from them, are in

harmony with the feelings and humors of my townsmen; that I have opened a vein of pleasant associations and quaint characteristics peculiar to my native place, and which its inhabitants will not willingly suffer to pass away; and that, though other histories of New-York may appear of higher claims to learned acceptation, and may take their dignified and appropriate rank in the family library, Knickerbocker's history will still be received with good-humored indulgence, and be thumbed and chuckled over by the family fireside.

W. I.

SUNNYSIDE 1848

BOOK III

IN WHICH IS RECORDED THE GOLDEN REIGN OF
WOUTER VAN TWILLER

CHAPTER I

Setting forth the unparalleled virtues of the renowned Wouter Van Twiller as likewise his unutterable wisdom in the law case of Wandle Schoonhoven and Barent Bleecker—and of the great admiration of the public thereat.

The renowned WOUTER (or Walter) VAN TWILLER, was descended from a long line of dutch burgomasters, who had successively dozed away their lives and grown fat upon the bench of magistracy in Rotterdam; and who had comported themselves with such singular wisdom and propriety, that they were never either heard or talked of—which, next to being universally applauded, should be the object of ambition of all sage magistrates and rulers.

His surname of Twiller, is said to be a corruption of the original *Twijfler*, which in English means *doubter*; a name admirably descriptive of his deliberative habits. For though he was a man, shut up within himself like an oyster, and of such a profoundly reflective turn, that he scarcely ever spoke except in monosyllables, yet did he never make up his mind, on any doubtful point. This was clearly accounted for by his adherents, who affirmed that he always conceived every object on so comprehensive a scale, that he had not room in his head, to turn it over and examine both sides of it, so that he always remained in doubt, merely in consequence of the astonishing magnitude of his ideas!

There are two opposite ways by which some men get into notice—one by talking a vast deal

and thinking a little, and the other by holding their tongues and not thinking at all. By the first many a vapouring, superficial pretender acquires the reputation of a man of quick parts—by the other many a vacant dunderpate, like the owl, the stupidest of birds, comes to be complimented, by a discerning world, with all the attributes of wisdom. This, by the way, is a mere casual remark, which I would not for the universe have it thought, I apply to Governor Van Twiller. On the contrary he was a very wise dutchman, for he never said a foolish thing—and of such invincible gravity, that he was never known to laugh, or even to smile, through the course of a long and prosperous life. Certain however it is, there never was a matter proposed, however simple, and on which your common narrow minded mortals, would rashly determine at the first glance, but what the renowned Wouter, put on a mighty mysterious, vacant kind of look, shook his capacious head, and having smoked for five minutes with redoubled earnestness, sagely observed, that “he had his doubts about the matter”—which in process of time gained him the character of a man slow of belief, and not easily imposed on.

The person of this illustrious old gentleman was as regularly formed and nobly proportioned, as though it had been moulded by the hands of some cunning dutch statuary, as a model of majesty and lordly grandeur. He was exactly five feet six inches in height, and six feet five inches in circumference. His head was a perfect sphere, far excelling in magnitude that of the great Pericles (who was thence waggishly called *Schenocephalus*, or onion head)—indeed, of such stupendous dimensions was it, that dame nature herself, with all her sex's ingenuity, would have been puzzled to construct a neck, capable of supporting it; wherefore she wisely declined the attempt, and settled it firmly on the top of his back bone, just between the shoulders; where it remained, as snugly bedded, as a ship of war in the mud of the Potowmac. His body was of an oblong form, particularly capacious at bottom; which was wisely ordered by providence, seeing that he was a man of sedentary habits, and very averse to the idle labour of walking. His legs, though exceeding short, were sturdy in proportion to the weight they had to sustain; so that when erect, he had not a little the appearance of a robustious beer barrel, standing on skids. His face, that infallible index of the mind, presented

a vast expanse perfectly unfurrowed or deformed by any of those lines and angles, which disfigure the human countenance with what is termed expression. Two small grey eyes twinkled feebly in the midst, like two stars of lesser magnitude, in a hazy firmament; and his full fed cheeks, which seemed to have taken toll of every thing that went into his mouth, were curiously mottled and streaked with dusky red, like a spitzenberg apple.

His habits were as regular as his person. He daily took his four stated meals, appropriating exactly an hour to each; he smoked and doubted eight hours, and he slept the remaining twelve of the four and twenty. Such was the renowned Wouter Van Twiller—a true philosopher, for his mind was either elevated above, or tranquilly settled below, the cares and perplexities of this world. He had lived in it for years, without feeling the least curiosity to know whether the sun revolved around it, or it round the sun; and he had even watched for at least half a century, the smoke curling from his pipe to the ceiling, without once troubling his head with any of those numerous theories, by which a philosopher would have perplexed his brain, in accounting for its rising above the surrounding atmosphere.

In his council he presided with great state and solemnity. He sat in a huge chair of solid oak hewn in the celebrated forest of the Hague, fabricated by an experienced Timmerman of Amsterdam, and curiously carved about the arms and feet, into exact imitations of gigantic eagle's claws. Instead of a sceptre he swayed a long turkish pipe, wrought with jasmin and amber, which had been presented to a stadtholder of Holland, at the conclusion of a treaty with one of the petty Barbary powers.—In this stately chair would he sit, and this magnificent pipe would he smoke, shaking his right knee with a constant motion, and fixing his eye for hours together upon a little print of Amsterdam, which hung in a black frame, against the opposite wall of the council chamber. Nay, it has ever been said, that when any deliberation of extraordinary length and intricacy was on the carpet, the renowned Wouter would absolutely shut his eyes for full two hours at a time, that he might not be disturbed by external objects—and at such times the internal commotion of his mind, was evinced by certain regular guttural sounds, which his admirers declared were merely the noise of conflict, made by his contending doubts and opinions.

It is with infinite difficulty I have been enabled to collect these biographical anecdotes of the great man under consideration. The facts respecting him were so scattered and vague, and divers of them so questionable in point of authenticity, that I have had to give up the search after many, and decline the admission of still more, which would have tended to heighten the colouring of his portrait.

I have been the more anxious to delineate fully, the person and habits of the renowned Van Twiller, from the consideration that he was not only the first, but also the best governor that ever presided over this ancient and respectable province; and so tranquil and benevolent was his reign, that I do not find throughout the whole of it, a single instance of any offender being brought to punishment.—a most indubitable sign of a merciful governor, and a case unparalleled, excepting in the reign of the illustrious King Log, from whom, it is hinted, the renowned Van Twiller was a lineal descendant.

The very outset of the career of this excellent magistrate, like that of Solomon, or to speak more appropriately, like that of the illustrious governor of Baratania, was distinguished by an example of legal acumen, that gave flattering presage of a wise and equitable administration. The very morning after he had been solemnly installed in office, and at the moment that he was making his breakfast from a prodigious earthen dish, filled with milk and Indian pudding, he was suddenly interrupted by the appearance of one Wandle Schoonhoven, a very important old burgher of New Amsterdam, who complained bitterly of one Barent Bleecker, inasmuch as he fraudulently refused to come to a settlement of accounts, seeing that there was a heavy balance in favour of the said Wandle. Governor Van Twiller, as I have already observed, was a man of few words, he was likewise a mortal enemy to multiplying writings—or being disturbed at his breakfast. Having therefore listened attentively to the statement of Wandle Schoonhoven, giving an occasional grunt, as he shovelled a mighty spoonful of Indian pudding into his mouth—either as a sign that he relished the dish, or comprehended the story—he called unto him his constable, and pulling out of his breeches pocket a huge jack-knife, dispatched it after the defendant as a summons, accompanied by his tobacco box as a warrant.

This summary process was as effectual in those

simple days, as was the seal ring of the great Haroun Alraschid, among the true believers—the two parties, being confronted before him, each produced a book of accounts, written in a language and character that would have puzzled any but a High Dutch commentator, or a learned decypherer of Egyptian obelisks, to understand. The Sage Wouter took them one after the other, and having poised them in his hands, and attentively counted over the number of leaves, fell straightway into a very great doubt, and smoked for half an hour without saying a word, at length, laying his finger beside his nose, and shutting his eyes for a moment, with the air of a man who has just caught a subtle idea by the tail, he slowly took his pipe from his mouth, puffed forth a column of tobacco smoke, and with marvellous gravity and solemnity pronounced—that having carefully counted over the leaves and weighed the books, it was found, that one was just as thick and heavy as the other—therefore it was the final opinion of the court that the accounts were equally balanced—therefore Wandle should give Barent a receipt, and Barent should give Wandle a receipt—and the constable should pay the costs.

This decision being straightway made known, diffused general joy throughout New Amsterdam, for the people immediately perceived, that they had a very wise and equitable magistrate to rule over them. But its happiest effect was, that not another law suit took place throughout the whole of his administration—and the office of constable fell into such decay, that there was not one of those lossel³ scouts known in the province for many years. I am the more particular in dwelling on this transaction, not only because I deem it one of the most sage and righteous judgments on record, and well worthy the attention of modern magistrates, but because it was a miraculous event in the history of the renowned Wouter—being the only time he was ever known to come to a decision, in the whole course of his life.

CHAPTER IV

Containing further particulars of the Golden Age, and what constituted a fine Lady and Gentleman in the days of Walter the Doubter.

In this dulcet period of my history, when the beauteous island of Mannahata presented a scene, the very counterpart of those glowing pic-

tures drawn by old Hesiod of the golden reign of Saturn, there was a happy ignorance, an honest simplicity prevalent among its inhabitants, which were I even able to depict, would be but little understood by the degenerate age for which I am doomed to write. Even the female sex, those arch innovators upon the tranquillity, the honesty, and grey-beard customs of society, seemed for a while to conduct themselves with incredible sobriety and comeliness, and indeed behaved almost as if they had not been sent into the world, to bother mankind, baffle philosophy, and confound the universe.

Their hair untortured by the abominations of art, was scrupulously pomatomed back from their foreheads with a candle, and covered with a little cap of quilted calico, which fitted exactly to their heads. Their petticoats of linsey woolsey, were striped with a variety of gorgeous dyes, rivalling the many coloured robes of Iris—though I must confess these gallant garments were rather short, scarce reaching below the knee; but then they made up in the number, which generally equalled that of the gentlemen's small-clothes; and what is still more praiseworthy, they were all of their own manufacture—of which circumstance, as may well be supposed, they were not a little vain.

These were the honest days, in which every woman staid at home, read the bible and wore pockets—aye, and that too of a goodly size, fashioned with patch-work into many curious devices, and ostentatiously worn on the outside. These in fact, were convenient receptacles, where all good housewives carefully stowed away such things as they wished to have at hand; by which means they often came to be incredibly crammed—and I remember there was a story current when I was a boy, that the lady of Wouter Van Twiller, having occasion to empty her right pocket in search of a wooden ladle, the contents filled three corn baskets, and the utensil was at length discovered lying among some rubbish in one corner—but we must not give too much faith to all these stories, the anecdotes of these remote periods being very subject to exaggeration.

Beside these notable pockets, they likewise wore scissars and pincushions suspended from their girdles by red ribbands, or among the more opulent and shewy classes, by brass and even silver chains—indubitable tokens of thrifty housewives and industrious spinsters. I cannot say much in vindication of the shortness of the petti-

³ Lossel (or losel), worthless.

coats, it doubtless was introduced for the purpose of giving the stockings a chance to be seen, which were generally of blue worsted with magnificent red clocks—or perhaps to display a well turned ankle, and a neat, though serviceable foot; set off by a high-heel'd leathern shoe, with a large and splendid silver buckle. Thus we find, that the gentle sex in all ages, have shewn the same disposition to infringe a little upon the laws of decorum, in order to betray a lurking beauty, or gratify an innocent love of finery.

From the sketch here given it will be seen, that our good grandmothers differed considerably in their ideas of a fine figure, from their scantily dressed descendants of the present day. A fine lady, in those times, waddled under more clothes even on a fair summer's day, than would have clad the whole bevy of a modern ball room. Nor were they the less admired by the gentlemen in consequence thereof. On the contrary, the greatness of a lover's passion seemed to encrease in proportion to the magnitude of its object—and a voluminous damsel, arrayed in a dozen of petticoats, was declared by a low-dutch sonneteer of the province, to be radiant as a sunflower, and luxuriant as a full blown cabbage. Certain it is, that in those days, the heart of a lover could not contain more than one lady at a time; whereas the heart of a modern gallant has often room enough to accommodate half a dozen—The reason of which I conclude to be, that either the hearts of the gentlemen have grown larger, or the persons of the ladies smaller—this however is a question for physiologists to determine.

But there was a secret charm in these petticoats, which no doubt entered into the consideration of the prudent gallant. The wardrobe of a lady was in those days her only fortune; and she who had a good stock of petticoats and stockings, was as absolutely an heiress, as is a Kamschatka damsel with a store of bear skins, or a Lapland belle with a plenty of rein deer. The ladies therefore, were very anxious to display these powerful attractions to the greatest advantage; and the best rooms in the house instead of being adorned with caricatures of dame nature, in water colours and needle work, were always hung round with abundance of home-spun garments; the manufacture and property of the females—a piece of laudable ostentation that still prevails among the heiresses of our dutch villages. Such were the beauteous belles of the ancient city of New Am-

sterdam, rivalling in primæval simplicity of manners, the renowned and courtly dames, so loftily sung by Dan Homer—who tells us that the princess Nausicaa, washed the family linen, and the fair Penelope wove her own petticoats.

The gentlemen in fact, who figured in the circles of the gay world in these ancient times, corresponded in most particulars, with the beauteous damsels whose smiles they were ambitious to deserve. True it is, their merits would make but a very inconsiderable impression, upon the heart of a modern fair; they neither drove in their curricles nor sported their tandems, for as yet those gaudy vehicles were not even dreamt of—neither did they distinguish themselves by their brilliance at the table, and their consequent rencou[n]tres with watchmen, for our forefathers were of too pacific a disposition to need those guardians of the night, every soul throughout the town being in full snore before nine o'clock. Neither did they establish their claims by gentility at the expense of their tailors—for as yet those offenders against the pockets of society, and the tranquillity of all aspiring young gentlemen, were unknown in New Amsterdam; every good housewife made the clothes of her husband and family, and even the goede vrouw of Van Twiller himself, thought it no disparagement to cut out her husband's linsey woolsey galligaskins.

Not but what there were some two or three youngsters who manifested the first dawns of what is called fire and spirit. Who held all labour in contempt; skulked about docks and market places; loitered in the sun shine; squandered what little money they could procure at hustle cap and chuck farthing, swore, boxed, fought cocks, and raced their neighbours' horses—in short who promised to be the wonder, the talk and abomination of the town, had not their stylish career been unfortunately cut short, by an affair of honour with a whipping post.

Far other, however, was the truly fashionable gentleman of those days—his dress, which served for both morning and evening, street and drawing room, was a linsey woolsey coat, made perhaps by the fair hands of the mistress of his affections, and gallantly bedecked with abundance of large brass buttons.—Half a score of breeches heightened the proportions of his figure—his shoes were decorated by enormous copper buckles—a low crowned broad brimmed hat overshadowed his burly visage, and his hair dangled

down his back, in a prodigious queue of eel skin.

Thus equipped, he would manfully sally forth with pipe in mouth to besiege some fair damsel's obdurate heart—not such a pipe, good reader, as that which Acis did sweetly tune in praise of his Galatea, but one of true delft manufacture and furnished with a charge of fragrant Cow-pen tobacco. With this would he resolutely set himself down before the fortress, and rarely failed in the process of time to smoke the fair enemy into a surrender, upon honourable terms.

Such was the happy reign of Wouter Van Twiller, celebrated in many a long forgotten song as the real golden age, the rest being nothing but counterfeit copper-washed coin. In that delightful period, a sweet and holy calm reigned over the whole province. The Burgomaster smoked his pipe in peace—the substantial solace of his domestic house, his well petticoated *yffrouw*, after her daily cares were done, sat soberly at her door, with arms crossed over her apron of snowy white, without being insulted by ribald street walkers or vagabond boys—those unlucky urchins, who do so infest our streets, displaying under the roses of youth, the thorns and briars of iniquity. Then it was that the lover with ten breeches and the damsel with petticoats of half a score indulged in all the innocent endearments of virtuous love, without fear and without reproach—for what had that virtue to fear, which was defended by a shield of good linsey woolseys, equal at least to the seven bull hides of the invincible Ajax.

Thrice happy, and never to be forgotten age! when every thing was better than it has ever been since, or ever will be again—when Buttermilk channel was quite dry at low water—when the shad in the Hudson were all salmon, and when the moon shone with a pure and resplendent whiteness, instead of that melancholy yellow light, which is the consequence of her sickening at the abominations she every night witnesses in this degenerate age!

from THE SKETCH BOOK

RIP VAN WINKLE

A POSTHUMOUS WRITING OF
DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER

(1819)

The basis of this story, which seems so thoroughly American, is an old folk legend which in various

forms is found in many countries. It is not native to the Hudson River region. Several German versions of the legend may have been known to Irving. (See his Note at the end of the story and Henry O. Pochmann, "Irving's German Sources in *The Sketch Book*," *Studies in Philology*, XXVII, 477-507, July, 1930) Perhaps when he wrote the story, Irving also recalled his visit to Abbotsford and Scott's account of Thomas the Rhymer. Irving's meeting with Scott had stimulated his desire to give America "a colour of romance and tradition" like that of lowland Scotland, for Scott, as Irving wrote in his notebook, had "tied the charms of poetry on every river hill & grey rock [and] made the desert to blossom as the rose." In "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" Irving, anticipating the local-color writers of the later nineteenth century, wrote our first great short stories.

"Rip Van Winkle" is remarkable for its pictorial qualities. Irving was a friend of Washington Allston and C. R. Leslie. It is significant that he called his book *The Sketch Book* and used the pen name "Geoffrey Crayon," for he thought of himself as a painter who employed words instead of brush or pencil. The impulse that led Irving to write the story was akin to that which moved the so-called Hudson River School of painters. Among these were Thomas Cole, who painted the "Falls of the Catskill" and who spent his last years in the Catskill region, and John B. Kensett, who painted "Sunset on the Adirondacks" and "Hudson River from Fort Putnam."

In this story as in other numbers of *The Sketch Book* Irving dwells on "mutability" and laments the "dilapidations of time." When he wrote the story in Birmingham, England, he was remembering his youthful rambles through the Hudson River country and wondering what changes time had brought to the people who lived there. At the time he wrote the story, a long period of European war and revolution had recently come to an end. Men were discovering that their world was not the same as that which had prevailed before the fall of the Bastille. Rip Van Winkle's long sleep, it should be noted, extended through the American Revolution, which had brought about the greatest changes yet experienced in American life. (For the famous play, based on Irving's story and notable for Joseph Jefferson's acting in the role of Rip, see A. H. Quinn's *Representative American Plays and his History of the American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War*.)

The following Tale was found among the papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker, an old gentleman of New York, who was very curious in the Dutch history of the province, and the manners of the de-

scendants from its primitive settlers His historical researches, however, did not lie so much among books as among men; for the former are lamentably scanty on his favorite topics, whereas he found the old burghers, and still more their wives, rich in that legendary lore so invaluable to true history Whenever, therefore, he happened upon a genuine Dutch family, snugly shut up in its low-roofed farmhouse, under a spreading sycamore, he looked upon it as a little clasped volume of black-letter, and studied it with the zeal of a book-worm.

The result of all these researches was a history of the province during the reign of the Dutch governors, which he published some years since. There have been various opinions as to the literary character of his work, and, to tell the truth, it is not a whit better than it should be. Its chief merit is its scrupulous accuracy, which indeed was a little questioned, on its first appearance, but has since been completely established; and it is now admitted into all historical collections, as a book of unquestionable authority.

The old gentleman died shortly after the publication of his work, and now that he is dead and gone, it cannot do much harm to his memory to say, that his time might have been much better employed in weightier labours. He, however, was apt to ride his hobby his own way; and though it did now and then kick up the dust a little in the eyes of his neighbours, and grieve the spirit of some friend, for whom he felt the truest deference and affection; yet his errors and follies are remembered "more in sorrow than in anger," and it begins to be suspected, that he never intended to injure or offend. But however his memory may be appreciated by critics, it is still held dear by many folk whose good opinion is well worth having, particularly by certain biscuit-bakers, who have gone so far as to imprint his likeness on their New-year cakes, and have thus given him a chance for immortality, almost equal to the being stamped on a Waterloo medal or a Queen Anne's farthing.

*By Woden, God of Saxons,
From whence comes Wensday, that is Wodensday,
Truth is a thing that ever I will keep
Unto thylike day in which I creep into
My sepulchre—*

CARTWRIGHT.

Whoever has made a voyage up the Hudson must remember the Kaatskill mountains. They are a dismembered branch of the great Appalachian family, and are seen away to the west of the river, swelling up to a noble height, and lordling it over the surrounding country. Every change of season, every change of weather, indeed, every hour of the day, produces some

change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains, and they are regarded by all the good wives, far and near, as perfect barometers. When the weather is fair and settled, they are clothed in blue and purple, and print their bold outlines on the clear evening sky; but sometimes, when the rest of the landscape is cloudless, they will gather a hood of gray vapors about their summits, which, in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory.

At the foot of these fairy mountains, the voyager may have descried the light smoke curling up from a village, whose shingle-roofs gleam among the trees, just where the blue tints of the upland melt away into the fresh green of the nearer landscape. It is a little village, of great antiquity, having been founded by some of the Dutch colonists, in the early times of the province, just about the beginning of the government of the good Peter Stuyvesant (may he rest in peace!) and there were some of the houses of the original settlers standing within a few years, built of small yellow bricks brought from Holland, having latticed windows and gable fronts, surmounted with weathercocks.

In that same village, and in one of these very houses (which, to tell the precise truth, was sadly time-worn and weather-beaten), there lived many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple good-natured fellow, of the name of Rip Van Winkle. He was a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous days of Peter Stuyvesant, and accompanied him to the siege of Fort Christina. He inherited, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple good-natured man; he was moreover, a kind neighbor, and an obedient henpecked husband. Indeed, to the latter circumstance might be owing that meekness of spirit which gained him such universal popularity; for those men are most apt to be obsequious and conciliating abroad, who are under the discipline of shrews at home. Their tempers, doubtless, are rendered pliant and malleable in the fiery furnace of domestic tribulation, and a curtain lecture is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering. A termagant wife may, therefore, in some respects, be considered a tolerable blessing; and if so, Rip Van Winkle was thrice blessed.

Certain it is, that he was a great favorite among

all the good wives of the village, who, as usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles, and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity, and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighbourhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labour. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance; for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling-piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbour even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone-fences; the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word, Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm; it was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country; everything about it went wrong, and would go wrong, in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces; his cow would either go astray, or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than anywhere else; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some out-door work to do; so that though his patrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst conditioned farm in the neighbourhood.

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the old clothes of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels, equipped in a pair of his father's cast-off galligaskins, which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.

Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment; but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the ruin he was bringing on his family. Morning, noon, and night, her tongue was incessantly going, and everything he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into a habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife; so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the outside of the house—the only side which, in truth, belongs to a hen-pecked husband.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much hen-pecked as his master; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye, as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all points of spirit befitting an honorable dog, he was as courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods—but what courage can withstand the ever-during and all-besetting terrors of a woman's tongue? The moment Wolf entered the house his crest fell, his tail drooped to the ground or curled between his legs, he sneaked about with a gallows air, casting many a sidelong glance at Dame Van Winkle, and at the least flourish of a broomstick or ladle, he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle as years of matrimony rolled on; a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to

console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village, which held its session on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of His Majesty George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade through a long lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions that sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper fell into their hands from some passing traveller. How solemnly they would listen to the contents, as drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, a dapper learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary; and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place.

The opinions of this junto were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch of the village, and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficiently to avoid the sun and keep in the shade of a large tree; so that the neighbours could tell the hour by his movements as accurately as by a sundial. It is true he was rarely heard to speak, but smoked his pipe incessantly. His adherents, however (for every great man has his adherents), perfectly understood him, and knew how to gather his opinions. When anything that was read or related displeased him, he was observed to smoke his pipe vehemently, and to send forth short, frequent, and angry puffs; but when pleased he would inhale the smoke slowly and tranquilly, and emit it in light and placid clouds; and sometimes, taking the pipe from his mouth, and letting the fragrant vapor curl about his nose, would gravely nod his head in token of perfect approbation.

From even this stronghold the unlucky Rip was at length routed by his termagant wife, who would suddenly break in upon the tranquillity of the assemblage and call the members all to naught; nor was that august personage, Nicholas Vedder himself, sacred from the daring tongue of this terrible virago, who charged him outright with encouraging her husband in habits of idleness.

Poor Rip was at last reduced almost to despair; and his only alternative, to escape from the labor

of the farm and clamor of his wife, was to take gun in hand and stroll away into the woods. Here he would sometimes seat himself at the foot of a tree, and share the contents of his wallet with Wolf, with whom he sympathized as a fellow-sufferer in persecution. "Poor Wolf," he would say, "thy mistress leads thee a dog's life of it; but never mind, my lad, whilst I live thou shalt never want a friend to stand by thee!" Wolf would wag his tail, look wistfully in his master's face, and if dogs can feel pity, I verily believe he reciprocated the sentiment with all his heart.

In a long ramble of the kind on a fine autumnal day, Rip had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Kaatskill mountains. He was after his favorite sport of squirrel-shooting, and the still solitudes had echoed and re-echoed with the reports of his gun. Panting and fatigued, he threw himself, late in the afternoon, on a green knoll, covered with mountain herbage, that crowned the brow of a precipice. From an opening between the trees he could overlook all the lower country for many a mile of rich woodland. He saw at a distance the lordly Hudson, far, far below him, moving on its silent but majestic course, with the reflection of a purple cloud, or the sail of a lagging bark, here and there sleeping on its glassy bosom, and at last losing itself in the blue highlands.

On the other side he looked down into a deep mountain glen, wild, lonely, and shagged, the bottom filled with fragments from the impending cliffs, and scarcely lighted by the reflected rays of the setting sun. For some time Rip lay musing on this scene, evening was gradually advancing; the mountains began to throw their long blue shadows over the valleys; he saw that it would be dark long before he could reach the village, and he heaved a heavy sigh when he thought of encountering the terrors of Dame Van Winkle.

As he was about to descend, he heard a voice from the distance, hallooing, "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" He looked round, but could see nothing but a crow winging its solitary flight across the mountain. He thought his fancy must have deceived him, and turned again to descend, when he heard the same cry ring through the still evening air: "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!"—at the same time Wolf bristled up his back, and, giving a loud growl, skulked to his master's side, looking fearfully down into the

glen. Rip now felt a vague apprehension stealing over him, he looked anxiously in the same direction, and perceived a strange figure slowly toiling up the rocks, and bending under the weight of something he carried on his back. He was surprised to see any human being in this lonely and unfrequented place; but supposing it to be some one of the neighbourhood in need of his assistance, he hastened down to yield it.

On nearer approach he was still more surprised at the singularity of the stranger's appearance. He was a short, square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair and a grizzled beard. His dress was of the antique Dutch fashion—a cloth jerkin strapped round the waist—several pair of breeches, the outer one of ample volume, decorated with rows of buttons down the sides, and bunches at the knees. He bore on his shoulder a stout keg, that seemed full of liquor, and made signs for Rip to approach and assist him with the load. Though rather shy and distrustful of this new acquaintance, Rip complied with his usual alacrity; and mutually relieving each other, they clambered up a narrow gully, apparently the dry bed of a mountain torrent. As they ascended, Rip every now and then heard long rolling peals, like distant thunder, that seemed to issue out of a deep ravine, or rather cleft, between lofty rocks, toward which their rugged path conducted. He paused for an instant, but supposing it to be the muttering of one of those transient thunder-showers which often take place in mountain heights, he proceeded. Passing through the ravine, they came to a hollow, like a small amphitheatre, surrounded by perpendicular precipices, over the brinks of which impending trees shot their branches, so that you only caught glimpses of the azure sky and the bright evening cloud. During the whole time Rip and his companion had labored on in silence; for though the former marvelled greatly what could be the object of carrying a keg of liquor up this wild mountain, yet there was something strange and incomprehensible about the unknown, that inspired awe and checked familiarity.

On entering the amphitheatre, new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the centre was a company of odd-looking personages playing at nine-pins. They were dressed in a quaint outlandish fashion; some wore short doublets, others jerkins, with long knives in their belts, and most of them had enormous breeches, of similar style with that of the guide's. Their

visages, too, were peculiar: one had a large head, broad face, and small piggish eyes; the face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white sugar-loaf hat, set off with a little red cock's tail. They all had beards, of various shapes and colors. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman, with a weather-beaten countenance; he wore a laced doublet, broad belt and hanger, high-crowned hat and feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes, with roses in them. The whole group reminded Rip of the figures in an old Flemish painting, in the parlor of Dominie Van Shaick, the village parson, and which had been brought over from Holland at the time of the settlement.

What seemed particularly odd to Rip was, that though these folks were evidently amusing themselves, yet they maintained the gravest faces, the most mysterious silence, and were, withal, the most melancholy party of pleasure he had ever witnessed. Nothing interrupted the stillness of the scene but the noise of the balls, which, whenever they were rolled, echoed along the mountains like rumbling peals of thunder.

As Rip and his companion approached them, they suddenly desisted from their play, and stared at him with such fixed, statue-like gaze, and such strange, uncouth, lack-lustre countenances, that his heart turned within him, and his knees smote together. His companion now emptied the contents of the keg into large flagons, and made signs to him to wait upon the company. He obeyed with fear and trembling; they quaffed the liquor in profound silence, and then returned to their game.

By degrees Rip's awe and apprehension subsided. He even ventured, when no eye was fixed upon him, to taste the beverage, which he found had much of the flavor of excellent Hollands. He was naturally a thirsty soul, and was soon tempted to repeat the draught. One taste provoked another; and he reiterated his visits to the flagon so often, that at length his senses were overpowered, his eyes swam in his head, his head gradually declined, and he fell into a deep sleep.

On waking, he found himself on the green knoll whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes—it was a bright sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering among the bushes, and the eagle was wheeling

aloft, and breasting the pure mountain breeze. "Surely," thought Rip, "I have not slept here all night." He recalled the occurrences before he fell asleep. The strange man with a keg of liquor—the mountain ravine—the wild retreat among the rocks—the woebegone party at nine-pins—the flagon—"Oh! that flagon! that wicked flagon!" thought Rip—"what excuse shall I make to Dame Van Winkle!"

He looked round for his gun, but in place of the clean well-oiled fowling-piece, he found an old firelock lying by him, the barrel incrustated with rust, the lock falling off, and the stock worm-eaten. He now suspected that the grave roysters of the mountain had put a trick upon him, and, having dosed him with liquor, had robbed him of his gun. Wolf, too, had disappeared, but he might have strayed away after a squirrel or partridge. He whistled after him and shouted his name, but all in vain; the echoes repeated his whistle and shout, but no dog was to be seen.

He determined to revisit the scene of the last evening's gambol, and, if he met with any of the party, to demand his dog and gun. As he rose to walk, he found himself stiff in the joints, and wanting in his usual activity. "These mountain beds do not agree with me," thought Rip, "and if this frolic should lay me up with a fit of rheumatism, I shall have a blessed time with Dame Van Winkle." With some difficulty he got down into the glen: he found the gully up which he and his companion had ascended the preceding evening; but, to his astonishment a mountain stream was now foaming down it, leaping from rock to rock, and filling the glen with babbling murmurs. He, however, made shift to scramble up its sides, working his toilsome way through thickets of birch, sassafras, and witch-hazel, and sometimes tripped up or entangled by the wild grape-vines that twisted their coils or tendrils from tree to tree, and spread a kind of network in his path.

At length he reached to where the ravine had opened through the cliffs to the amphitheatre; but no traces of such opening remained. The rocks presented a high impenetrable wall, over which the torrent came tumbling in a sheet of feathery foam, and fell into a broad deep basin, black from the shadows of the surrounding forest. Here, then, poor Rip was brought to a stand. He again called and whistled after his dog; he was only answered by the cawing of a flock of idle

crows, sporting high in air about a dry tree that overhung a sunny precipice; and who, secure in their elevation, seemed to look down and scoff at the poor man's perplexities. What was to be done?—the morning was passing away, and Rip felt famished for want of his breakfast. He grieved to give up his dog and his gun, he dreaded to meet his wife; but it would not do to starve among the mountains. He shook his head, shouldered the rusty firelock, and, with a heart full of trouble and anxiety, turned his steps homeward.

As he approached the village he met a number of people, but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with everyone in the country round. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and whenever they cast their eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this gesture induced Rip, involuntarily, to do the same, when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long!

He had now entered the skirts of the village. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his gray beard. The dogs, too, not one of which he recognized for an old acquaintance, barked at him as he passed. The very village was altered; it was larger and more populous. There were rows of houses which he had never seen before, and those which had been his familiar haunts had disappeared. Strange names were over the doors—strange faces at the windows—everything was strange. His mind now misgave him; he began to doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. Surely this was his native village, which he had left but the day before. There stood the Kaatskill mountains—there ran the silver Hudson at a distance—there was every hill and dale precisely as it had always been—Rip was sorely perplexed—"That flagon last night," thought he, "has addled my poor head sadly!"

It was with some difficulty that he found the way to his own house, which he approached with silent awe, expecting every moment to hear the shrill voice of Dame Van Winkle. He found the house gone to decay—the roof fallen in, the windows shattered, and the doors off the hinges. A half-starved dog that looked like Wolf was skulking about it. Rip called him by name, but the cur snarled, showed his teeth, and passed on. This

was an unkind cut indeed—"My very dog," sighed poor Rip, "has forgotten me!"

He entered the house, which, to tell the truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept in neat order. It was empty, forlorn, and apparently abandoned. The desolateness overcame all his conubial fears—he called loudly for his wife and children—the lonely chambers rang for a moment with his voice, and then all again was silence.

He now hurried forth, and hastened to his old resort, the village inn—but it too was gone. A large rickety wooden building stood in its place, with great gaping windows, some of them broken and mended with old hats and petticoats, and over the door was painted, "The Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle." Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn of yore, there was now reared a tall naked pole, with something on the top that looked like a red nightcap, and from it was fluttering a flag, on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes—all this was strange and incomprehensible. He recognized on the sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under which he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe; but even this was singularly metamorphosed. The red coat was changed for one of blue and buff, a sword was held in the hand instead of a sceptre, the head was decorated with a cocked hat, and underneath was painted in large characters, GENERAL WASHINGTON.

There was, as usual, a crowd of folks about the door, but none that Rip recollected. The very character of the people seemed changed. There was a busy, bustling, disputatious tone about it, instead of the accustomed phlegm and drowsy tranquillity. He looked in vain for the sage Nicholas Vedder, with his broad face, double chin, and fair long pipe, uttering clouds of tobacco-smoke instead of idle speeches; or Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, doling forth the contents of an ancient newspaper. In place of these, a lean, bilious-looking fellow, with his pockets full of hand-bills, was haranguing vehemently about rights of citizens—elections—members of Congress—liberty—Bunker's Hill—heroes of seventy-six—and other words, which were a perfect Babylonish jargon to the bewildered Van Winkle.

The appearance of Rip, with his long grizzled beard, his rusty fowling-piece, his uncouth dress, and an army of women and children at his heels, soon attracted the attention of the tavern politi-

cians. They crowded round him, eyeing him from head to foot with great curiosity. The orator bustled up to him, and, drawing him partly aside, inquired "on which side he voted?" Rip stared in vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and, rising on tip-toe, inquired in his ear, "Whether he was Federal or Democrat?" Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend the question; when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle, with one arm akimbo, the other resting on his cane, his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul, demanded in an austere tone, "What brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder, and a mob at his heels, and whether he meant to breed a riot in the village?"—"Alas! gentlemen," cried Rip, somewhat dismayed, "I am a poor quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the king. God bless him!"

Here a general shout burst from the bystanders—"A tory! a tory! a spy! a refugee! hustle him! away with him!" It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order; and, having assumed a tenfold austerity of brow, demanded again of the unknown culprit, what he came there for, and whom he was seeking? The poor man humbly assured him that he meant no harm, but merely came there in search of some of his neighbors, who used to keep about the tavern.

"Well—who are they?—name them."

Rip bethought himself a moment, and inquired, "Where's Nicholas Vedder?"

There was a silence for a little while, when an old man replied, in a thin piping voice, "Nicholas Vedder! why, he is dead and gone these eighteen years! There was a wooden tombstone in the churchyard that used to tell all about him, but that's rotten and gone too."

"Where's Brom Dutcher?"

"Oh, he went off to the army in the beginning of the war; some say he was killed at the storming of Stony Point—others say he was drowned in a squall at the foot of Antony's Nose. I don't know—he never came back again."

"Where's Van Bummel, the schoolmaster?"

"He went off to the wars too, was a great militia general, and is now in Congress."

Rip's heart died away at hearing of these sad changes in his home and friends, and finding himself thus alone in the world. Every answer puzzled him too, by treating of such enormous lapses of time, and of matters which he could not understand: war—Congress—Stony Point;—he had not courage to ask after any more friends, but cried out in despair, "Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle?"

"Oh, Rip Van Winkle!" exclaimed two or three, "Oh, to be sure! that's Rip Van Winkle yonder, leaning against the tree."

Rip looked, and beheld a precise counterpart of himself, as he went up the mountain: apparently as lazy, and certainly as ragged. The poor fellow was now completely confounded. He doubted his own identity, and whether he was himself or another man. In the midst of his bewilderment, the man in the cocked hat demanded who he was, and what was his name?

"God knows," exclaimed he, at his wits' end; "I'm not myself—I'm somebody else—that's me yonder—no—that's somebody else got into my shoes—I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain, and they've changed my gun, and everything's changed, and I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am!"

The bystanders began now to look at each other, nod, wink significantly, and tap their fingers against their foreheads. There was a whisper, also, about securing the gun, and keeping the old fellow from doing mischief, at the very suggestion of which the self-important man in the cocked hat retired with some precipitation. At this critical moment a fresh comely woman pressed through the throng to get a peep at the gray-bearded man. She had a chubby child in her arms, which, frightened at his looks, began to cry. "Hush, Rip," cried she, "hush, you little fool; the old man won't hurt you." The name of the child, the air of the mother, the tone of her voice, all awakened a train of recollections in his mind.

"What is your name, my good woman?" he asked.

"Judith Gardenier."

"And your father's name?"

"Ah, poor man, Rip Van Winkle was his name, but it's twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and never has been heard of since—his dog came home without him; but whether he shot himself, or was carried away by

the Indians, nobody can tell. I was then but a little girl."

Rip had but one question more to ask; but he put it with a faltering voice:

"Where's your mother?"

"Oh, she too had died but a short time since; she broke a blood-vessel in a fit of passion at a New-England pedler."

There was a drop of comfort, at least, in this intelligence. The honest man could contain himself no longer. He caught his daughter and her child in his arms. "I am your father!" cried he—"Young Rip Van Winkle once—old Rip Van Winkle now!—Does nobody know poor Rip Van Winkle?"

All stood amazed, until an old woman, tottering out from among the crowd, put her hand to her brow, and peering under it in his face for a moment, exclaimed, "Sure enough! it is Rip Van Winkle—it is himself! Welcome home again, old neighbour—Why, where have you been these twenty long years?"

Rip's story was soon told, for the whole twenty years had been to him but as one night. The neighbours stared when they heard it; some were seen to wink at each other, and put their tongues in their cheeks: and the self-important man in the cocked hat, who, when the alarm was over, had returned to the field, screwed down the corners of his mouth, and shook his head—upon which there was a general shaking of the head throughout the assemblage.

It was determined, however, to take the opinion of old Peter Vanderdonk, who was seen slowly advancing up the road. He was a descendant of the historian of that name, who wrote one of the earliest accounts of the province. Peter was the most ancient inhabitant of the village, and well versed in all the wonderful events and traditions of the neighbourhood. He recollected Rip at once, and corroborated his story in the most satisfactory manner. He assured the company that it was a fact, handed down from his ancestor the historian, that the Kaatskill mountains had always been haunted by strange beings. That it was affirmed that the great Hendrick Hudson, the discoverer of the river and country, kept a kind of vigil there every twenty years, with his crew of the *Half-moon*; being permitted in this way to revisit the scenes of his enterprise, and keep a guardian eye upon the river, and the great city called by his name. That his father had once seen

them in their old Dutch dresses playing at nine-pins in a hollow of the mountain; and that he himself had heard, one summer afternoon, the sound of their balls, like distant peals of thunder.

To make a long story short, the company broke up, and returned to the more important concerns of the election. Rip's daughter took him home to live with her; she had a snug, well-furnished house, and a stout cheery farmer for a husband, whom Rip recollected for one of the urchins that used to climb upon his back. As to Rip's son and heir, who was the ditto of himself, seen leaning against the tree, he was employed to work on the farm; but evinced an hereditary disposition to attend to anything else but his business.

Rip now resumed his old walks and habits; he soon found many of his former cronies, though all rather the worse for the wear and tear of time; and preferred making friends among the rising generation, with whom he soon grew into great favor.

Having nothing to do at home, and being arrived at that happy age when a man can be idle with impunity, he took his place once more on the bench at the inn door, and was revered as one of the patriarchs of the village, and a chronicle of the old times "before the war." It was some time before he could get into the regular track of gossip, or could be made to comprehend the strange events that had taken place during his torpor. How that there had been a revolutionary war—that the country had thrown off the yoke of old England—and that, instead of being a subject of his Majesty George the Third, he was now a free citizen of the United States. Rip, in fact, was no politician; the changes of states and empires made but little impression on him; but there was one species of despotism under which he had long groaned, and that was—petticoat government. Happily that was at an end; he had got his neck out of the yoke of matrimony, and could go in and out whenever he pleased, without dreading the tyranny of Dame Van Winkle. Whenever her name was mentioned, however, he shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and cast up his eyes; which might pass either for an expression of resignation to his fate, or joy at his deliverance.

He used to tell his story to every stranger that arrived at Mr. Doolittle's hotel. He was observed at first to vary on some points every time he told it, which was, doubtless, owing to his having so

recently awaked. It at last settled down precisely to the tale I have related, and not a man, woman, or child in the neighbourhood, but knew it by heart. Some always pretended to doubt the reality of it, and insisted that Rip had been out of his head, and that this was one point on which he always remained flighty. The old Dutch inhabitants, however, almost universally gave it full credit. Even to this day they never hear a thunderstorm of a summer afternoon about the Kaatskill, but they say Hendrick Hudson and his crew are at their game of nine-pins; and it is a common wish of all hen-pecked husbands in the neighbourhood, when life hangs heavy on their hands, that they might have a quieting draught out of Rip Van Winkle's flagon.

NOTE.—The foregoing Tale, one would suspect, had been suggested to Mr. Knickerbocker by a little German superstition about the Emperor Frederick *der Rothbart*, and the Kypphauser mountain the subjoined note, however, which he had appended to the tale, shows that it is an absolute fact, narrated with his usual fidelity:

"The story of Rip Van Winkle may seem incredible to many, but nevertheless I give it my full belief, for I know the vicinity of our old Dutch settlements to have been very subject to marvellous events and appearances. Indeed, I have heard many stranger stories than this, in the villages along the Hudson, all of which were too well authenticated to admit of a doubt. I have even talked with Rip Van Winkle myself, who, when last I saw him, was a very venerable old man, and so perfectly rational and consistent on every other point, that I think no conscientious person could refuse to take this into the bargain; nay, I have seen a certificate on the subject taken before a country justice, and signed with a cross, in the justice's own handwriting. The story, therefore, is beyond the possibility of doubt. D.K."

POSTSCRIPT.—The following are travelling notes from a memorandum-book of Mr. Knickerbocker:

The Kaatsberg, or Catskill Mountains, have always been a region full of fable. The Indians considered them the abode of spirits, who influenced the weather, spreading sunshine or clouds over the landscape, and sending good or bad hunting seasons. They were ruled by an old squaw spirit, said to be their mother. She dwelt on the highest peak of the Catskills, and had charge of the doors of day and night, to open and shut them at the proper hour. She hung up the new moons in the skies, and cut up the old ones into stars. In times of drought, if properly propitiated, she would spin light summer clouds out of cobwebs and morning dew, and send them

off from the crest of the mountain, flake after flake, like flakes of carded cotton, to float in the air until, dissolved by the heat of the sun, they would fall in gentle showers, causing the grass to spring, the fruits to ripen, and the corn to grow an inch an hour. If displeased, however, she would brew up clouds black as ink, sitting in the midst of them like a bottle-bellied spider in the midst of its web; and when these clouds broke, woe betide the valleys!

In old times, say the Indian traditions, there was a kind of Manitou or Spirit, who kept about the wildest recesses of the Catskill Mountains, and took a mischievous pleasure in wreaking all kinds of evils and vexations upon the red men. Sometimes he would assume the form of a bear, a panther, or a deer, lead the bewildered hunter a weary chase through tangled forests and among ragged rocks; and then spring off with a loud ho! ho! leaving him aghast on the brink of a beetling precipice or raging torrent.

The favorite abode of this Manitou is still shown. It is a great rock or cliff on the loneliest part of the mountains, and, from the flowering vines which clamber about it, and the wild flowers which abound in its neighbourhood, is known by the name of the Garden Rock. Near the foot of it is a small lake, the haunt of the solitary bittern, with water-snakes basking in the sun on the leaves of the pond-lilies, which lie on the surface. This place was held in great awe by the Indians, insomuch that the boldest hunter would not pursue his game within its precincts. Once upon a time, however, a hunter who had lost his way, penetrated to the Garden Rock, where he beheld a number of gourds placed in the crotches of trees. One of these he seized and made off with, but in the hurry of his retreat he let it fall among the rocks, when a great stream gushed forth, which washed him away and swept him down precipices, where he was dashed to pieces, and the stream made its way to the Hudson, and continues to flow to the present day, being the identical stream known by the name of the Kaaters-kill.

ENGLISH WRITERS ON AMERICA

(1820)

"If there is any justification in calling an American essay 'The American Declaration of Literary Independence' the title should be conferred on this neglected number in 'The Sketch Book,'" says Percy H. Boynton in his *History of American Literature*. At the time the essay was written, the so-called paper war between England and America was still raging, and Sydney Smith was asking, "Who reads an American book?" Only Irving's great tact enabled him to

publish such a warning without stirring up a hornet's nest in England.

"Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation, rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: methinks I see her as an eagle, mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her endazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam."—MILTON ON THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS¹

It is with feelings of deep regret that I observe the literary animosity daily growing up between England and America. Great curiosity has been awakened of late with respect to the United States, and the London press has teemed with volumes of travels through the Republic; but they seem intended to diffuse error rather than knowledge; and so successful have they been, that, notwithstanding the constant intercourse between the nations, there is no people concerning whom the great mass of the British public have less pure information or entertain more numerous prejudices.

English travellers are the best and the worst in the world. Where no motives of pride or interest intervene, none can equal them for profound and philosophical views of society, or faithful and graphical descriptions of external objects; but when either the interest or reputation of their own country comes in collision with that of another, they go to the opposite extreme, and forget their usual probity and candor, in the indulgence of splenetic remark, and an illiberal spirit of ridicule.

Hence, their travels are more honest and accurate, the more remote the country described. I would place implicit confidence in an Englishman's description of the regions beyond the cataracts of the Nile; of unknown islands in the Yellow Sea; of the interior of India; or of any other tract which other travellers might be apt to picture out with the illusions of their fancies; but I would cautiously receive his account of his immediate neighbors, and of those nations with which he is in habits of most frequent intercourse. However I might be disposed to trust his probity, I dare not trust his prejudices.

It has been also the peculiar lot of our country

¹ From Milton's *Areopagitica* (1644). The figure of "a noble and puissant nation," also used in William Vaughn Moody's "An Ode in Time of Hesitation," probably refers not to America but to a reawakening England under Puritan rule.

to be visited by the worst kind of English travellers. While men of philosophical spirit and cultivated minds have been sent from England to ransack the poles, to penetrate the deserts, and to study the manners and customs of barbarous nations, with which she can have no permanent intercourse of profit or pleasure; it has been left to the broken-down tradesman, the scheming adventurer, the wandering mechanic, the Manchester and Birmingham agent, to be her oracles respecting America. From such sources she is content to receive her information respecting a country in a singular state of moral and physical development, a country in which one of the greatest political experiments in the history of the world is now performing; and which presents the most profound and momentous studies to the statesman and the philosopher.

That such men should give prejudicial accounts of America is not a matter of surprise. The themes it offers for contemplation are too vast and elevated for their capacities. The national character is yet in a state of fermentation; it may have its frothiness and sediment, but its ingredients are sound and wholesome; it has already given proofs of powerful and generous qualities; and the whole promises to settle down into something substantially excellent. But the causes which are operating to strengthen and ennoble it, and its daily indications of admirable properties, are all lost upon these purblind observers, who are only affected by the little asperities incident to its present situation. They are capable of judging only of the surface of things; of those matters which come in contact with their private interests and personal gratifications. They miss some of the snug conveniences and petty comforts which belong to an old, highly-finished, and over-populous state of society; where the ranks of useful labor are crowded, and many earn a painful and servile subsistence by studying the very caprices of appetite and self-indulgence. These minor comforts, however, are all-important in the estimation of narrow minds; which either do not perceive, or will not acknowledge, that they are more than counter-balanced among us by great and generally diffused blessings.

They may, perhaps, have been disappointed in some unreasonable expectation of sudden gain. They may have pictured America to themselves an El Dorado, where gold and silver

abounded, and the natives were lacking in sagacity, and where they were to become strangely and suddenly rich, in some unforeseen, but easy manner. The same weakness of mind that indulges absurd expectations produces petulance in disappointment. Such persons become embittered against the country on finding that there, as everywhere else, a man must sow before he can reap; must win wealth by industry and talent; and must contend with the common difficulties of nature, and the shrewdness of an intelligent and enterprising people.

Perhaps, through mistaken, or ill-directed hospitality, or from the prompt disposition to cheer and countenance the stranger, prevalent among my countrymen, they may have been treated with unwonted respect in America, and having been accustomed all their lives to consider themselves below the surface of good society, and brought up in a servile feeling of inferiority, they become arrogant on the common boon of civility. They attribute to the lowliness of others their own elevation; and underrate a society where there are no artificial distinctions, and where, by any chance, such individuals as themselves can rise to consequence.

One would suppose, however, that information coming from such sources, on a subject where the truth is so desirable, would be received with caution by the censors of the press; that the motives of these men, their veracity, their opportunities of inquiry and observation, and their capacities for judging correctly, would be rigorously scrutinized before their evidence was admitted, in such sweeping extent, against a kindred nation. The very reverse, however, is the case, and it furnishes a striking instance of human inconsistency. Nothing can surpass the vigilance with which English critics will examine the credibility of the traveller who publishes an account of some distant, and comparatively unimportant, country. How warily will they compare the measurements of a pyramid, or the description of a ruin; and how sternly will they censure any inaccuracy in these contributions of merely curious knowledge: while they will receive, with eagerness and unhesitating faith, the gross misrepresentations of coarse and obscure writers, concerning a country with which their own is placed in the most important and delicate relations. Nay, they will even make these apocryphal volumes textbooks, on which to enlarge with

a zeal and an ability worthy of a more generous cause.

I shall not, however, dwell on this irksome and hackneyed topic, nor should I have adverted to it, but for the undue interest apparently taken in it by my countrymen, and certain injurious effects which I apprehend it might produce upon the national feeling. We attach too much consequence to these attacks. They cannot do us any essential injury. The tissue of misrepresentations attempted to be woven round us are like cobwebs woven round the limbs of an infant giant. Our country continually outgrows them. One falsehood after another falls off of itself. We have but to live on, and every day we live a whole volume of refutation. All the writers of England united, if we could for a moment suppose their great minds stooping to so unworthy a combination, could not conceal our rapidly growing importance, and matchless prosperity. They could not conceal that these are owing, not merely to physical and local, but also to moral causes—to the political liberty, the general diffusion of knowledge, the prevalence of sound moral and religious principles, which give force and sustained energy to the character of a people; and which, in fact, have been the acknowledged and wonderful supporters of their own national power and glory.

But why are we so exquisitely alive to the aspersions of England? Why do we suffer ourselves to be so affected by the contumely she has endeavored to cast upon us? It is not in the opinion of England alone that honor lives, and reputation has its being. The world at large is the arbiter of a nation's fame; with its thousand eyes it witnesses a nation's deeds, and from their collective testimony is national glory or national disgrace established.

For ourselves, therefore, it is comparatively of but little importance whether England does us justice or not; it is, perhaps, of far more importance to herself. She is instilling anger and resentment into the bosom of a youthful nation, to grow with its growth and strengthen with its strength. If in America, as some of her writers are laboring to convince her, she is hereafter to find an invidious rival, and a gigantic foe, she may thank those very writers for having provoked rivalry and irritated hostility. Every one knows the all-pervading influence of literature at the present day, and how much the opinions

and passions of mankind are under its control. The mere contests of the sword are temporary; their wounds are but in the flesh, and it is the pride of the generous to forgive and forget them; but the slanders of the pen pierce to the heart, they rankle longest in the noblest spirits, they dwell ever present in the mind, and render it morbidly sensitive to the most trifling collision. It is but seldom that any one overt act produces hostilities between two nations; there exists, most commonly, a previous jealousy and ill-will, a predisposition to take offence. Trace these to their cause, and how often will they be found to originate in the mischievous effusions of mercenary writers; who, secure in their closets, and for ignominious bread, concoct and circulate the venom that is to inflame the generous and the brave.

I am not laying too much stress upon this point; for it applies most emphatically to our particular case. Over no nation does the press hold a more absolute control than over the people of America; for the universal education of the poorest classes makes every individual a reader. There is nothing published in England on the subject of our country that does not circulate through every part of it. There is not a calumny dropped from English pen, nor an unworthy sarcasm uttered by an English statesman, that does not go to blight good-will, and add to the mass of latent resentment. Possessing, then, as England does, the fountain-head whence the literature of the language flows, how completely is it in her power, and how truly is it her duty, to make it the medium of amiable and magnanimous feeling—a stream where the two nations might meet together, and drink in peace and kindness. Should she, however, persist in turning it to waters of bitterness, the time may come when she may repent her folly. The present friendship of America may be of but little moment to her; but the future destinies of that country do not admit of a doubt; over those of England there lower some shadows of uncertainty. Should, then, a day of gloom arrive; should those reverses overtake her, from which the proudest empires have not been exempt; she may look back with regret at her infatuation, in repulsing from her side a nation she might have grappled to her bosom, and thus destroying her only chance for real friendship beyond the boundaries of her own dominions.

There is a general impression in England, that the people of the United States are inimical to the parent country. It is one of the errors which have been diligently propagated by designing writers. There is, doubtless, considerable political hostility, and a general soreness at the illiberality of the English press; but, generally speaking, the prepossessions of the people are strongly in favor of England. Indeed, at one time they amounted, in many parts of the Union, to an absurd degree of bigotry. The bare name of Englishman was a passport to the confidence and hospitality of every family, and too often gave a transient currency to the worthless and the ungrateful. Throughout the country there was something of enthusiasm connected with the idea of England. We looked to it with a hallowed feeling of tenderness and veneration, as the land of our forefathers—the august repository of the monuments and antiquities of our race—the birthplace and mausoleum of the sages and heroes of our paternal history. After our own country, there was none in whose glory we more delighted—none whose good opinion we were more anxious to possess—none toward which our hearts yearned with such throbbings of warm consanguinity. Even during the late war, whenever there was the least opportunity for kind feelings to spring forth, it was the delight of the generous spirits of our country to show that, in the midst of hostilities, they still kept alive the sparks of future friendship.

Is all this to be at an end? Is this golden band of kindred sympathies, so rare between nations, to be broken forever?—Perhaps it is for the best—it may dispel an illusion which might have kept us in mental vassalage; which might have interfered occasionally with our true interests, and prevented the growth of proper national pride. But it is hard to give up the kindred tie! and there are feelings dearer than interest—closer to the heart than pride—that will still make us cast back a look of regret, as we wander farther and farther from the paternal roof, and lament the waywardness of the parent that would repel the affections of the child.

Short-sighted and injudicious, however, as the conduct of England may be in this system of aspersion, recrimination on our part would be equally ill-judged. I speak not of a prompt and spirited vindication of our country, nor the keenest castigation of her slanderers—but I al-

lude to a disposition to retaliate in kind; to retort sarcasm, and inspire prejudice; which seems to be spreading widely among our writers. Let us guard particularly against such a temper, for it would double the evil instead of redressing the wrong. Nothing is so easy and inviting as the retort of abuse and sarcasm; but it is a paltry and an unprofitable contest. It is the alternative of a morbid mind, fretted into petulance, rather than warmed into indignation. If England is willing to permit the mean jealousies of trade, or the rancorous animosities of politics, to deprave the integrity of her press, and poison the fountain of public opinion, let us beware of her example. She may deem it her interest to diffuse error, and engender antipathy, for the purpose of checking emigration; we have no purpose of the kind to serve. Neither have we any spirit of national jealousy to gratify, for as yet, in all our rivalships with England, we are the rising and the gaining party. There can be no end to answer, therefore, but the gratification of resentment—a mere spirit of retaliation; and even that is impotent. Our retorts are never republished in England; they fall short, therefore, of their aim; but they foster a querulous and peevish temper among our writers; they sour the sweet flow of our early literature, and sow thorns and brambles among its blossoms. What is still worse, they circulate through our own country, and, as far as they have effect, excite virulent national prejudices. This last is the evil most especially to be deprecated. Governed, as we are, entirely by public opinion, the utmost care should be taken to preserve the purity of the public mind. Knowledge is power, and truth is knowledge; whoever, therefore, knowingly propagates a prejudice, willfully saps the foundation of his country's strength.

The members of a republic, above all other men, should be candid and dispassionate. They are, individually, portions of the sovereign mind and sovereign will, and should be enabled to come to all questions of national concern with calm and unbiased judgments. From the peculiar nature of our relations with England, we must have more frequent questions of a difficult and delicate character with her than with any other nation; questions that affect the most acute and excitable feelings; and as, in the adjustment of these, our national measures must ultimately be determined by popular sentiment, we cannot

be too anxiously attentive to purify it from all latent passion or prepossession.

Opening, too, as we do, an asylum for strangers from every portion of the earth, we should receive all with impartiality. It should be our pride to exhibit an example of one nation, at least, destitute of national antipathies, and exercising not merely the overt acts of hospitality, but those more rare and noble courtesies which spring from liberality of opinion.

What have we to do with national prejudices? They are the inveterate diseases of old countries, contracted in rude and ignorant ages, when nations knew but little of each other, and looked beyond their own boundaries with distrust and hostility. We, on the contrary, have sprung into national existence in an enlightened and philosophic age, when the different parts of the habitable world, and the various branches of the human family, have been indefatigably studied and made known to each other, and we forego the advantages of our birth, if we do not shake off the national prejudices, as we would the local superstitions, of the old world.

But above all let us not be influenced by any angry feelings, so far as to shut our eyes to the perception of what is really excellent and amiable in the English character. We are a young people, necessarily an imitative one, and must take our examples and models, in a great degree, from the existing nations of Europe. There is no country more worthy of our study than England. The spirit of her constitution is most analogous to ours. The manners of her people—their intellectual activity—their freedom of opinion—their habits of thinking on those subjects which concern the dearest interests and most sacred charities of private life, are all congenial to the American character; and, in fact, are all intrinsically excellent; for it is in the moral feeling of the people that the deep foundations of British prosperity are laid; and however the superstructure may be time-worn, or overrun by abuses, there must be something solid in the basis, admirable in the materials, and stable in the structure of an edifice that so long has towered unshaken amidst the tempests of the world.

Let it be the pride of our writers, therefore, discarding all feelings of irritation, and disdaining to retaliate the illiberality of British authors, to speak of the English nation without prejudice, and with determined candor. While they

rebuke the indiscriminating bigotry with which some of our countrymen admire and imitate everything English, merely because it is English, let them frankly point out what is really worthy of approbation. We may thus place England before us as a perpetual volume of reference, wherein are recorded sound deductions from ages of experience, and while we avoid the errors and absurdities which may have crept into the page, we may draw thence golden maxims of practical wisdom, wherewith to strengthen and to embellish our national character.

from THE ALHAMBRA

LEGEND OF THE MOOR'S LEGACY

(1832)

In 1829 Irving lived for some months in the Alhambra (at Granada), a fortress-palace of the Moorish kings.

Just within the fortress of the Alhambra, in front of the royal palace, is a broad open esplanade, called the place or square of the cisterns, (*la plaza de los algibes*), so called from being undermined by reservoirs of water, hidden from sight, and which have existed from the time of the Moors. At one corner of this esplanade is a Moorish well, cut through the living rock to a great depth, the water of which is cold as ice and clear as crystal. The wells made by the Moors are always in repute, for it is well known what pains they took to penetrate to the purest and sweetest springs and fountains. The one of which we now speak is famous throughout Granada, inasmuch that water-carriers, some bearing great water-jars on their shoulders, others driving asses before them, laden with earthen vessels, are ascending and descending the steep woody avenues of the Alhambra from early dawn until a late hour of the night.

Fountains and wells, ever since the Scriptural days, have been noted gossiping places in hot climates, and at the well in question there is a kind of perpetual club kept up during the live-long day, by the invalids, old women, and other curious, do-nothing folk of the fortress, who sit here on the stone benches under an awning spread over the well to shelter the toll-gatherer

from the sun, and dawdle over the gossip of the fortress, and question every water-carrier that arrives about the news of the city, and make long comments on everything they hear and see. Not an hour of the day but loitering housewives and idle maid-servants may be seen, lingering with pitcher on head or in hand, to hear the last of the endless tattle of these worthies.

Among the water-carriers who once resorted to this well there was a study, strong-backed, bandy-legged little fellow, named Pedro Gil, but called Peregil for shortness. Being a water-carrier, he was a Gallego, or native of Galicia, of course Nature seems to have formed races of men as she has of animals for different kinds of drudgery. In France the shoe-blacks are all Savoyards, the porters of hotels all Swiss, and in the days of hoops and hair powder in England, no man could give the regular swing to a sedan chair, but a bog-trotting Irishman So in Spain the carriers of water and bearers of burdens are all sturdy little natives of Galicia. No man says, "Get me a porter," but, "Call a Gallego."

To return from this digression. Peregil the Gallego had begun business with merely a great earthen jar, which he carried upon his shoulder; by degrees he rose in the world, and was enabled to purchase an assistant of a correspondent class of animals, being a stout shaggy-haired donkey. On each side of this his long-eared aid-de-camp, in a kind of pannier, were slung his water-jars covered with fig leaves to protect them from the sun. There was not a more industrious water-carrier in all Granada, nor one more merry withal. The streets rang with his cheerful voice as he trudged after his donkey, singing forth the usual summer note that resounds through the Spanish towns: "*Quien quiere agua—agua mas fria que la nieve.*—Who wants water—water colder than snow—who wants water from the well of the Alhambra—cold as ice and clear as crystal?" When he served a customer with a sparkling glass, it was always with a pleasant word that caused a smile, and if, perchance, it was a comely dame, or dimpling damsel, it was always with a sly leer and a compliment to her beauty that was irresistible. Thus Peregil the Gallego was noted throughout all Granada for being one of the civilest, pleasantest, and happiest of mortals. Yet it is not he who sings loudest and jokes most that has the lightest heart. Under all this air of merriment, honest Peregil

had his cares and troubles. He had a large family of ragged children to support, who were hungry and clamorous as a nest of young swallows, and beset him with their outcries for food whenever he came home of an evening. He had a helpmate, too, who was anything but a help to him She had been a village beauty before marriage, noted for her skill at dancing the bolero and rattling the castañets, and she still retained her early propensities, spending the hard earnings of honest Peregil in frippery, and laying the very donkey under requisition for junketing parties into the country on Sundays, and saints' days, and those innumerable holidays which are rather more numerous in Spain than the days of the week. With all this she was a little of a slattern, something more of a lie-a-bed, and, above all, a gossip of the first water; neglecting house, household, and everything else, to loiter slipshod in the houses of her gossip neighbors.

He, however, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, accommodates the yoke of matrimony to the submissive neck. Peregil bore all the heavy dispensations of wife and children with as meek a spirit as his donkey bore the water-jars, and, however he might shake his ears in private, never ventured to question the household virtues of his slattern spouse.

He loved his children too, even as an owl loves its owlets, seeing in them his own image multiplied and perpetuated, for they were a sturdy, long-backed, bandy-legged little brood. The great pleasure of honest Peregil was, whenever he could afford himself a scanty holiday and had a handful of maravedis to spare, to take the whole litter forth with him, some in his arms, some tugging at his skirts, and some trudging at his heels, and to treat them to a gambol among the orchards of the Vega, while his wife was dancing with her holiday friends in the *angosturas* of the Darro.

It was a late hour one summer night, and most of the water-carriers had desisted from their toils. The day had been uncommonly sultry; the night was one of those delicious moonlights, which tempt the inhabitants of southern climes to indemnify themselves for the heat and inaction of the day, by lingering in the open air and enjoying its tempered sweetness until after midnight. Customers for water were therefore still abroad. Peregil, like a considerate, painstaking father, thought of his hungry children. "One more

journey to the well," said he to himself, "to earn a Sunday's *puchero*¹ for the little ones." So saying, he trudged manfully up the steep avenue of the Alhambra, singing as he went, and now and then bestowing a hearty thwack with a cudgel on the flanks of his donkey, either by way of cadence to the song, or refreshment to the animal: for dry blows serve in lieu of proven-der in Spain, for all beasts of burden.

When arrived at the well, he found it deserted by every one except a solitary stranger in Moorish garb, seated on a stone bench in the moonlight. Peregil paused at first, and regarded him with surprise, not unmixed with awe, but the Moor feebly beckoned him to approach.

"I am faint and ill," said he; "aid me to return to the city, and I will pay thee double what thou couldst gain by thy jars of water."

The honest heart of the little water-carrier was touched with compassion at the appeal of the stranger. "God forbid," said he, "that I should ask fee or reward for doing a common act of humanity."

He accordingly helped the Moor on his donkey, and set off slowly for Granada, the poor Moslem being so weak that it was necessary to hold him on the animal to keep him from falling to the earth.

When they entered the city, the water-carrier demanded whither he should conduct him. "Alas!" said the Moor, faintly, "I have neither home nor habitation. I am a stranger in the land. Suffer me to lay my head this night beneath thy roof, and thou shalt be amply repaid."

Honest Peregil thus saw himself unexpectedly saddled with an infidel guest, but he was too humane to refuse a night's shelter to a fellow-being in so forlorn a plight; so he conducted the Moor to his dwelling. The children, who had sallied forth, open-mouthed as usual, on hearing the tramp of the donkey, ran back with affright, when they beheld the turbaned stranger, and hid themselves behind their mother. The latter stepped forth intrepidly, like a ruffling hen before her brood, when a vagrant dog approaches.

"What infidel companion," cried she, "is this you have brought home at this late hour, to draw upon us the eyes of the Inquisition?"

"Be quiet, wife," replied the Gallego, "here is a poor sick stranger, without friend or home:

wouldst thou turn him forth to perish in the streets?"

The wife would still have remonstrated, for, although she lived in a hovel, she was a furious stickler for the credit of her house; the little water-carrier, however, for once was stiff-necked, and refused to bend beneath the yoke. He assisted the poor Moslem to alight, and spread a mat and a sheepskin for him, on the ground, in the coolest part of the house; being the only kind of bed that his poverty afforded.

In a little while the Moor was seized with violent convulsions, which defied all the ministering skill of the simple water-carrier. The eye of the poor patient acknowledged his kindness. During an interval of his fits he called him to his side, and addressing him in a low voice; "My end," said he, "I fear is at hand. If I die I bequeath you this box as a reward for your charity." So saying, he opened his albornoz, or cloak, and showed a small box of sandal-wood, strapped round his body.

"God grant, my friend," replied the worthy little Gallego, "that you may live many years to enjoy your treasure, whatever it may be."

The Moor shook his head; he laid his hand upon the box, and would have said something more concerning it, but his convulsions returned with increased violence, and in a little while he expired.

The water-carrier's wife was now as one distracted. "This comes," said she, "of your foolish good-nature, always running into scrapes to oblige others. What will become of us when this corpse is found in our house? We shall be sent to prison as murderers, and if we escape with our lives, shall be ruined by notaries and alguazils."²

Poor Peregil was in equal tribulation, and almost repented himself of having done a good deed. At length a thought struck him. "It is not yet day," said he. "I can convey the dead body out of the city and bury it in the sands on the banks of the Xenil. No one saw the Moor enter our dwelling, and no one will know anything of his death." So said, so done. The wife aided him. They rolled the body of the unfortunate Moslem in the mat on which he had expired, laid it across the ass, and Peregil set out with it for the banks of the river.

As ill luck would have it, there lived opposite

¹ Pottage.

² Constables.

to the water-carrier a barber, named Pedrillo Pedrugo, one of the most prying, tattling, mischief-making, of his gossipy tribe. He was a weasel-faced, spider-legged varlet, supple and insinuating, the famous Barber of Seville³ could not surpass him for his universal knowledge of the affairs of others, and he had no more power of retention than a sieve. It was said that he slept but with one eye at a time, and kept one ear uncovered, so that, even in his sleep, he might see and hear all that was going on. Certain it is, he was a sort of scandalous chronicle for the quidnuncs of Granada, and had more customers than all the rest of the fraternity.

This meddlesome barber heard Peregil arrive at an unusual hour at night, and the exclamations of his wife and children. His head was instantly popped out of a little window which served him as a lookout, and he saw his neighbor assist a man in Moorish garb into his dwelling. This was so strange an occurrence that Pedrillo Pedrugo slept not a wink that night—every five minutes he was at his loophole, watching the lights that gleamed through the chinks of his neighbor's door, and before daylight he beheld Peregil sally forth with his donkey unusually laden.

The inquisitive barber was in a fidget; he slipped on his clothes, and, stealing forth silently, followed the water-carrier at a distance, until he saw him dig a hole in the sandy bank of the Xenil, and bury something that had the appearance of a dead body.

The barber hied him home and fidgeted about his shop, setting everything upside down, until sunrise. He then took a basin under his arm, and sallied forth to the house of his daily customer, the Alcalde.⁴

The Alcalde was just risen. Pedrillo Pedrugo seated him in a chair, threw a napkin round his neck, put a basin of hot water under his chin, and began to mollify his beard with his fingers.

"Strange doings," said Pedrugo, who played barber and newsmonger at the same time. "Strange doings! Robbery, and murder, and burial, all in one night!"

"Hey? how? What is that you say?" cried the Alcalde.

"I say," replied the barber, rubbing a piece

³ In Beaumarchais's *The Barber of Seville* (1775), a comedy.

⁴ Mayor, or magistrate.

of soap over the nose and mouth of the dignitary, for a Spanish barber disdains to employ a brush; "I say that Peregil the Gallego has robbed and murdered a Moorish Mussulman, and buried him this blessed night,—*maldita sea la noche*,—accursed be the night for the same!"

"But how do you know all this?" demanded the Alcalde.

"Be patient, Señor, and you shall hear all about it," replied Pedrillo, taking him by the nose and sliding a razor over his cheek. He then recounted all that he had seen, going through both operations at the same time, shaving his beard, washing his chin, and wiping him dry with a dirty napkin, while he was robbing, murdering, and burying the Moslem.

Now it so happened that this Alcalde was one of the most overbearing, and at the same time most griping and corrupt curmudgeons in all Granada. It could not be denied, however, that he set a high value upon justice, for he sold it at its weight in gold. He presumed the case in point to be one of murder and robbery; doubtless there must be rich spoil; how was it to be secured into the legitimate hands of the law? for as to merely entrapping the delinquent—that would be feeding the gallows: but entrapping the booty—that would be enriching the judge; and such, according to his creed, was the great end of justice. So thinking, he summoned to his presence his trustiest alguazil; a gaunt, hungry-looking varlet, clad, according to the custom of his order, in the ancient Spanish garb—a broad black beaver, turned up at its sides; a quaint ruff, a small black cloak dangling from his shoulders; rusty black underclothes that set off his spare wiry frame; while in his hand he bore a slender white wand, the dreaded insignia of his office. Such was the legal bloodhound of the ancient Spanish breed, that he put upon the traces of the unlucky water-carrier; and such was his speed and certainty that he was upon the haunches of poor Peregil before he had returned to his dwelling, and brought both him and his donkey before the dispenser of justice.

The Alcalde bent upon him one of the most terrific frowns. "Hark ye, culprit," roared he in a voice that made the knees of the little Gallego smite together,—“Hark, ye culprit! there is no need of denying thy guilt: everything is known to me. A gallows is the proper reward for the crime thou hast committed, but I am merciful,

and readily listen to reason. The man that has been murdered in thy house was a Moor, an infidel, the enemy of our faith. It was doubtless in a fit of religious zeal that thou hast slain him. I will be indulgent, therefore; render up the property of which thou hast robbed him, and we will hush the matter up."

The poor water-carrier called upon all the saints to witness his innocence; alas! not one of them appeared, and if they had, the Alcalde would have disbelieved the whole calendar. The water-carrier related the whole story of the dying Moor with the straightforward simplicity of truth, but it was all in vain: "Wilt thou persist in saying," demanded the judge, "that this Moslem had neither gold nor jewels, which were the object of thy cupidity?"

"As I hope to be saved, your worship," replied the water-carrier, "he had nothing but a small box of sandal-wood, which he bequeathed to me in reward for my services."

"A box of sandal-wood! a box of sandal-wood!" exclaimed the Alcalde, his eyes sparkling at the idea of precious jewels, "and where is this box? where have you concealed it?"

"An it please your grace," replied the water-carrier, "it is in one of the panniers of my mule, and heartily at the service of your worship."

He had hardly spoken the words when the keen alguazil darted off and reappeared in an instant with the mysterious box of sandal-wood. The Alcalde opened it with an eager and trembling hand; all pressed forward to gaze upon the treasure it was expected to contain; when, to their disappointment, nothing appeared within but a parchment scroll, covered with Arabic characters, and an end of a waxen taper!

When there is nothing to be gained by the conviction of a prisoner, justice, even in Spain, is apt to be impartial. The Alcalde, having recovered from his disappointment and found that there was really no booty in the case, now listened dispassionately to the explanation of the water-carrier, which was corroborated by the testimony of his wife. Being convinced, therefore, of his innocence, he discharged him from arrest; nay more, he permitted him to carry off the Moor's legacy, the box of sandal-wood and its contents, as the well-merited reward of his humanity; but he retained his donkey in payment of cost and charges.

Behold the unfortunate little Gallego reduced

once more to the necessity of being his own water-carrier, and trudging up to the well of the Alhambra with a great earthen jar upon his shoulder. As he toiled up the hill in the heat of a summer noon his usual good-humor forsook him. "Dog of an Alcalde!" would he cry, "to rob a poor man of the means of his subsistence—of the best friend he had in the world!" And then, at the remembrance of the beloved companion of his labors, all the kindness of his nature would break forth. "Ah, donkey of my heart!" would he exclaim, resting his burden on a stone, and wiping the sweat from his brow. "Ah, donkey of my heart! I warrant thee thou thinkest of thy old master! I warrant me thou missest the water-jars—poor beast!"

To add to his afflictions his wife received him, on his return home, with whimperings and repinings, she had clearly the vantage-ground of him, having warned him not to commit the egregious act of hospitality which had brought on him all these misfortunes, and like a knowing woman, she took every occasion to throw her superior sagacity in his teeth. If her children lacked food, or needed a new garment, she could answer with a sneer, "Go to your father; he is heir to king Chico of the Alhambra. Ask him to help you out of the Moor's strong box."

Was ever poor mortal so soundly punished, for having done a good action! The unlucky Peregil was grieved in flesh and spirit, but still he bore meekly with the railings of his spouse. At length one evening, when, after a hot day's toil, she taunted him in the usual manner, he lost all patience. He did not venture to retort upon her, but his eye rested upon the box of sandal-wood, which lay on a shelf with lid half open, as if laughing in mockery at his vexation. Seizing it up he dashed it with indignation to the floor. "Unlucky was the day that I ever set eyes on thee," he cried, "or sheltered thy master beneath my roof."

As the box struck the floor the lid flew wide open, and the parchment scroll rolled forth. Peregil sat regarding the scroll for some time in moody silence. At length rallying his ideas, "Who knows," thought he, "but this writing may be of some importance, as the Moor seems to have guarded it with such care." Picking it up, therefore, he put it in his bosom, and the next morning, as he was crying water through the streets, he stopped at the shop of a Moor, a native of

Tangiers, who sold trinkets and perfumery in the Zacatin,⁵ and asked him to explain the contents.

The Moor read the scroll attentively, then stroked his beard and smiled. "This manuscript," said he, "is a form of incantation for the recovery of hidden treasure, that is under the power of enchantment. It is said to have such virtue that the strongest bolts and bars, nay the adamant rock itself will yield before it."

"Bah!" cried the little Gallego, "what is all that to me! I am no enchanter, and know nothing of buried treasure." So saying he shouldered his water-jar, left the scroll in the hands of the Moor, and trudged forward on his daily rounds.

That evening, however, as he rested himself about the twilight at the well of the Alhambra, he found a number of gossips assembled at the place, and their conversation, as is not unusual at that shadowy hour, turned upon old tales and traditions of a supernatural nature. Being all poor as rats, they dwelt with peculiar fondness upon the popular theme of enchanted riches left by the Moors in various parts of the Alhambra. Above all, they concurred in the belief that there were great treasures buried deep in the earth under the tower of the Seven Floors.

These stories made an unusual impression on the mind of the honest Peregil, and they sank deeper and deeper into his thoughts as he returned alone down the darkling avenues. "If, after all, there should be treasure hid beneath that tower--and if the scroll I left with the Moor should enable me to get at it!" In the sudden ecstasy of the thought he had well-nigh let fall his water-jar.

That night he tumbled and tossed, and could scarcely get a wink of sleep for the thoughts that were bewildering his brain. Bright and early, he repaired to the shop of the Moor, and told him all that was passing in his mind. "You can read Arabic," said he, "suppose we go together to the tower and try the effect of the charm; if it fails we are no worse off than before, but if it succeeds we will share equally all the treasure we may discover."

"Hold," replied the Moslem, "this writing is not sufficient of itself; it must be read at midnight, by the light of a taper singularly compounded and prepared, the ingredients of which

are not within my reach. Without such a taper the scroll is of no avail."

"Say no more!" cried the little Gallego. "I have such a taper at hand and will bring it here in a moment." So saying he hastened home, and soon returned with the end of yellow wax taper that he had found in the box of sandal-wood.

The Moor felt it, and smelt of it. "Here are rare and costly perfumes," said he, "combined with this yellow wax. This is the kind of taper specified in the scroll. While this burns, the strongest walls and most secret caverns will remain open; woe to him, however, who lingers within until it be extinguished. He will remain enchanted with the treasure."

It was now agreed between them to try the charm that very night. At a late hour, therefore, when nothing was stirring but bats and owls, they ascended the woody hill of the Alhambra, and approached that awful tower, shrouded by trees and rendered formidable by so many traditional tales.

By the light of a lantern, they groped their way through bushes, and over fallen stones, to the door of a vault beneath the tower. With fear and trembling they descended a flight of steps cut into the rock. It led to an empty chamber, damp and drear, from which another flight of steps led to a deeper vault. In this way they descended four several flights, leading into as many vaults, one below the other, but the floor of the fourth was solid, and though, according to tradition, there remained three vaults still below, it was said to be impossible to penetrate farther, the residue being shut up by strong enchantment. The air of this vault was damp and chilly, and had an earthy smell, and the light scarce cast forth any rays. They paused here for a time in breathless suspense, until they faintly heard the clock of the watch-tower strike midnight; upon this they lit the waxen taper, which diffused an odor of myrrh, and frankincense, and storax.

The Moor began to read in a hurried voice. He had scarce finished, when there was a noise as of subterranean thunder. The earth shook, and the floor yawning open disclosed a flight of steps. Trembling with awe they descended, and by the light of the lantern found themselves in another vault, covered with Arabic inscriptions. In the centre stood a great chest, secured with seven bands of steel, at each end of which

⁵ A market street in Granada.

sat an enchanted Moor in armor, but motionless as a statue, being controlled by the power of the incantation. Before the chest were several jars filled with gold and silver and precious stones. In the largest of these they thrust their arms up to the elbow, and at every dip hauled forth hands full of broad yellow pieces of Moorish gold, or bracelets and ornaments of the same precious metal, while occasionally a necklace of Oriental pearl would stick to their fingers. Still they trembled and breathed short while cramming their pockets with the spoils; and cast many a fearful glance at the two enchanted Moors, who sat grim and motionless, glaring upon them with unwinking eyes. At length, struck with sudden panic at some fancied noise, they both rushed up the staircase, tumbled over one another into the upper apartment, overturned and extinguished the waxen taper, and the pavement again closed with a thundering sound.

Filled with dismay, they did not pause until they had groped their way out of the tower, and beheld the stars shining through the trees. Then seating themselves upon the grass, they divided the spoil determining to content themselves for the present with this mere skimming of the jars, but to return on some future night and drain them to the bottom. To make sure of each other's good faith, also, they divided the talismans between them, one retaining the scroll and the other the taper; this done, they set off with light hearts and well-lined pockets for Granada.

As they wended their way down the hill, the shrewd Moor whispered a word of counsel in the ear of the simple little water-carrier.

"Friend Peregil," said he, "all this affair must be kept a profound secret until we have secured the treasure and conveyed it out of harm's way. If a whisper of it gets to the ear of the Alcalde we are undone!"

"Certainly!" replied the Gallego; "nothing can be more true."

"Friend Peregil," said the Moor, "you are a discreet man, and I make no doubt can keep a secret; but—you have a wife——"

"She shall not not know a word of it!" replied the little water-carrier sturdily.

"Enough," said the Moor, "I depend upon thy discretion and thy promise."

Never was promise more positive and sincere; but alas! what man can keep a secret from his wife? Certainly not such a one as Peregil the

water-carrier, who was one of the most loving and tractable of husbands. On his return home he found his wife moping in a corner.

"Mighty well!" cried she, as he entered; "you've come at last, after rambling about until this hour of the night. I wonder you have not brought home another Moor as a house-mate." Then bursting into tears she began to wring her hands and smite her breast. "Unhappy woman that I am!" exclaimed she, "what will become of me! My house stripped and plundered by lawyers and alguazils; my husband a do-no-good that no longer brings home bread to his family, but goes rambling about, day and night, with infidel Moors. Oh, my children! my children! what will become of us; we shall all have to beg in the streets!"

Honest Peregil was so moved by the distress of his spouse, that he could not help whimpering also. His heart was as full as his pocket, and not to be restrained. Thrusting his hand into the latter he hauled forth three or four broad gold pieces and slipped them into her bosom. The poor woman stared with astonishment, and could not understand the meaning of this golden shower. Before she could recover her surprise, the little Gallego drew forth a chain of gold and dangled it before her, capering with exultation, his mouth distended from ear to ear.

"Holy Virgin protect us!" exclaimed the wife. "What hast thou been doing, Peregil? Surely thou hast not been committing murder and robbery!"

The idea scarce entered the brain of the poor woman than it became a certainty with her. She saw a prison and a gallows in the distance, and a little bandy-legged Gallego hanging pendent from it; and, overcome by the horrors conjured up by her imagination, fell into violent hysterics.

What could the poor man do? He had no other means of pacifying his wife and dispelling the phantoms of her fancy, than by relating the whole story of his good fortune. This, however, he did not do until he had exacted from her the most solemn promise to keep it a profound secret from every living being.

To describe her joy would be impossible. She flung her arms round the neck of her husband, and almost strangled him with her caresses. "Now, wifel!" exclaimed the little man with honest exultation, "what say you now to the Moor's legacy? Henceforth never abuse me for helping a fellow creature in distress."

The honest Gallego retired to his sheepskin mat, and slept soundly as if on a bed of down. Not so his wife.—She emptied the whole contents of his pockets upon the mat, and sat counting gold pieces of Arabic coin, trying on necklaces and ear-rings, and fancying the figure she would one day make when permitted to enjoy her riches.

On the following morning the honest Gallego took a broad golden coin, and repaired with it to a jeweller's shop in the Zacatin to offer it for sale; pretending to have found it among the ruins of the Alhambra. The jeweller saw that it had an Arabic inscription and was of the purest gold; he offered, however, but a third of its value, with which the water-carrier was perfectly content. Peregil now bought new clothes for his little flock, and all kinds of toys, together with ample provisions for a hearty meal, and returning to his dwelling set all his children dancing around him, while he capered in the midst, the happiest of fathers.

The wife of the water-carrier kept her promise of secrecy with surprising strictness. For a whole day and a half she went about with a look of mystery and a heart swelling almost to bursting, yet she held her peace, though surrounded by her gossips. It is true she could not help giving herself a few airs, apologized for her ragged dress, and talked of ordering a new *basquiña*⁶ all trimmed with gold lace and bugles, and a new lace mantilla. She threw out hints of her husband's intention of leaving off his trade of water-carrying, as it did not altogether agree with his health. In fact she thought they should all retire to the country for the summer, that the children might have the benefit of the mountain air, for there was no living in the city in this sultry season.

The neighbors stared at each other, and thought the poor woman had lost her wits, and her airs and graces and elegant pretensions were the theme of universal scoffing and merriment among her friends, the moment her back was turned.

If she restrained herself abroad, however, she indemnified herself at home, and, putting a string of rich Oriental pearls round her neck, Moorish bracelets on her arms; an aigrette of diamonds on her head, sailed backwards and for-

wards in her slattern rags about the room, now and then stopping to admire herself in a broken mirror. Nay, in the impulse of her simple vanity, she could not resist on one occasion showing herself at the window, to enjoy the effect of her finery on the passers by.

As the fates would have it, Pedrillo Pedrugo, the meddlesome barber, was at this moment sitting idly in his shop on the opposite side of the street, when his ever watchful eye caught the sparkle of a diamond. In an instant he was at his loophole, reconnoitring the slattern spouse of the water-carrier, decorated with the splendor of an eastern bride. No sooner had he taken an accurate inventory of her ornaments than he posted off with all speed to the Alcalde. In a little while the hungry alguazil was again on the scent, and before the day was over, the unfortunate Peregil was once more dragged into the presence of the judge.

"How is this villain!" cried the Alcalde in a furious voice. "You told me that the infidel who died in your house left nothing behind but an empty coffer, and now I hear of your wife flaunting in her rags decked out with pearls and diamonds. Wretch, that thou art! prepare to render up the spoils of thy miserable victim, and to swing on the gallows that is already tired of waiting for thee."

The terrified water-carrier fell on his knees, and made a full relation of the marvellous manner in which he had gained his wealth. The Alcalde, the alguazil, and the inquisitive barber listened with greedy ears to the Arabian tale of enchanted treasure. The alguazil was despatched to bring the Moor who had assisted in the incantation. The Moslem entered half frightened out of his wits at finding himself in the hands of the harpies of the law. When he beheld the water-carrier standing with sheepish look and downcast countenance, he comprehended the whole matter. "Miserable animal," said he, as he passed near him, "did I not warn thee against babbling to thy wife?"

The story of the Moor coincided exactly with that of his colleague; but the Alcalde affected to be slow of belief, and threw out menaces of imprisonment and rigorous investigation.

"Softly, good Señor Alcalde," said the Mussulman, who by this time had recovered his usual shrewdness and self-possession. "Let's not mar fortune's favors in the scramble for them. No-

⁶ A rich outer petticoat worn by Basque and Spanish women.

body knows anything of this matter but ourselves; let us keep the secret. There is wealth enough in the cave to enrich us all. Promise a fair division, and all shall be produced; refuse, and the cave shall remain forever closed."

The Alcalde consulted apart with the alguazil. The latter was an old fox in his profession. "Promise anything," said he, "until you get possession of the treasure. You may then seize upon the whole, and if he or his accomplice dare to murmur, threaten them with the fagot and the stake as infidels and sorcerers."

The Alcalde relished the advice. Smoothing his brow and turning to the Moor,—"This is a strange story," said he, "and may be true, but I must have ocular proof of it. This very night you must repeat the incantation in my presence. If there really be such treasure, we shall share it amicably between us, and say nothing further of the matter, if ye have deceived me, expect no mercy at my hands. In the meantime you must remain in custody."

The Moor and the water-carrier cheerfully agreed to these conditions, satisfied that the event would prove the truth of their words.

Towards midnight the Alcalde sallied forth secretly, attended by the alguazil and the meddlesome barber, all strongly armed. They conducted the Moor and the water-carrier as prisoners, and were provided with the stout donkey of the latter, to bear off the expected treasure. They arrived at the tower without being observed, and tying the donkey to a fig-tree, descended into the fourth vault of the tower.

The scroll was produced, the yellow waxen taper lighted, and the Moor read the form of incantation. The earth trembled as before, and the pavement opened with a thundering sound, disclosing the narrow flight of steps. The Alcalde, the alguazil, and the barber were struck aghast, and could not summon courage to descend. The Moor and the water-carrier entered the lower vault and found the two Moors seated as before, silent and motionless. They removed two of the great jars filled with golden coin and precious stones. The water-carrier bore them up one by one upon his shoulders, but though a strong-back little man, and accustomed to carry burdens, he staggered beneath their weight, and found, when slung on each side of his donkey, they were as much as the animal could bear.

"Let us be content for the present," said the

Moor; "here is as much treasure as we can carry off without being perceived, and enough to make us all wealthy to our heart's desire."

"Is there more treasure remaining behind?" demanded the Alcalde.

"The greatest prize of all," said the Moor; "a huge coffer, bound with bands of steel, and filled with pearls and precious stones."

"Let us have up the coffer by all means," cried the grasping Alcalde.

"I will descend for no more," said the Moor, doggedly. "Enough is enough for a reasonable man; more is superfluous."

"And I," said the water-carrier, "will bring up no further burden to break the back of my poor donkey."

Finding commands, threats, and entreaties equally vain, the Alcalde turned to his two adherents. "Aid me," said he, "to bring up the coffer, and its contents shall be divided between us." So saying he descended the steps, followed, with trembling reluctance, by the alguazil and the barber.

No sooner did the Moor behold them fairly earthed than he extinguished the yellow taper: the pavement closed with its usual crash, and the three worthies remained buried in its womb.

He then hastened up the different flights of steps, nor stopped until in the open air. The little water-carrier followed him as fast as his short legs would permit.

"What hast thou done?" cried Peregil, as soon as he could recover breath. "The Alcalde and the other two are shut up in the vault!"

"It is the will of Allah!" said the Moor, devoutly.

"And you will not release them?" demanded the Gallego.

"Allah forbid!" replied the Moor, smoothing his beard. "It is written in the book of fate that they shall remain enchanted until some future adventurer arrive to break the charm. The will of God be done!" So saying he hurled the end of the waxen taper far among the gloomy thickets of the glen.

There was now no remedy; so the Moor and the water-carrier proceeded with the richly-laden donkey towards the city: nor could honest Peregil refrain from hugging and kissing his long-eared fellow-laborer, thus restored to him from the clutches of the law; and, in fact, it is doubtful which gave the simple-hearted little man most

joy at the moment, the gaining of the treasure or the recovery of the donkey.

The two partners in good luck divided their spoil amicably and fairly, except that the Moor, who had a little taste for trinketry, made out to get into his heap the most of the pearls and precious stones, and other baubles, but then he always gave the water-carrier in lieu magnificent jewels of massy gold of five times the size, with which the latter was heartily content. They took care not to linger within reach of accidents, but made off to enjoy their wealth undisturbed in other countries. The Moor returned to Africa, to his native city of Tangiers, and the Gallego, with his wife, his children, and his donkey, made the best of his way to Portugal. Here, under the admonition and tuition of his wife, he became a personage of some consequence, for she made the worthy little man array his long body and

short legs in doublet and hose, with a feather in his hat and a sword by his side; and, laying aside his familiar appellation of Peregil, assume the more sonorous title of Don Pedro Gil. His progeny grew up a thriving and merry-hearted, though short and bandy-legged generation; while Señora Gil, be-fringed, be-laced, and be-tasseled from her head to her heels, with glittering rings on every finger, became a model of slattern fashion and finery.

As to the Alcalde, and his adjuncts, they remained shut up under the great tower of the Seven Floors, and there they remain spellbound at the present day. Whenever there shall be a lack in Spain of pimping barbers, sharking alguazils, and corrupt Alcaldes, they may be sought after, but if they have to wait until such time for their deliverance, there is danger of their enchantment enduring until doomsday.

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

1789 - 1851

*And I honor the man who is willing to sink
Half his present repute for the freedom to think,
And, when he has thought, be his cause strong or weak,
Will risk t' other half for the freedom to speak,
Caring naught for the vengeance the mob has in store,
Let that mob be the upper ten thousand or lower.*

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, *A Fable for Critics*.

James Cooper (he added his mother's family name *Fenimore* in 1826) was born on September 15, 1789. He was eighteen years younger than Scott, with whom he has often been compared, six years younger than Irving, and five years older than Bryant. Cooper was born in Burlington, New Jersey, but when he was thirteen months old, the family removed to Lake Otsego in southern New York, where his father owned a vast tract of land. Judge William Cooper, the Federalist father, reminds one of the landed patroons of New York State, and even more of the great planter landowners of the South. The novelist himself grew up to

be primarily a country gentleman with conservative social sympathies and democratic political principles. During Cooper's boyhood the Cooperstown region was passing out of the frontier stage. In *The Pioneers* (1823), which Francis Parkman the historian considered the best of the Leather-Stocking Tales, Cooper gave a faithful picture of the semi-frontier life of his boyhood. Contrary to the general opinion, there were no wild Indians in that section during Cooper's early years.

There is little in the first thirty years of Cooper's life to lead one to expect him to become a writer of fiction. He seems primarily a country gentleman or a man of affairs rather than a man of letters. Fortunately, however, when accident did turn him to writing, he was equipped with a first-hand acquaintance with important unexploited literary materials. No earlier writer, in either England or America, had his intimate knowledge of the sea and sailors or of the American forest and the frontier types that inhabited it.

After being prepared for college, chiefly by an English rector at Albany, Cooper entered Yale at the age of thirteen. At that time President Timothy Dwight was trying to enforce a stricter system of discipline upon the students. In some way the independent, high-spirited Cooper incurred the displeasure of the authorities and was required to leave college in the summer of 1806. The family tradition is that Cooper's offense was setting off an explosion in another student's room by pushing a rag full of powder through the keyhole.

What was now to be done with the seventeen-year-old boy who had been dismissed from college? A literary career was probably the last to be thought of by either father or son. Cooper went to sea, as Melville did some years later. After serving as foremast hand on a merchant ship, he was, on January 1, 1808, commissioned as Midshipman in the U. S. Navy, the history of which he was later to write. Late in 1808 he was sent to Oswego on Lake Ontario—the scene of *The Pathfinder* (1840)—to help build ships for the Navy. In 1810 he asked for a year's furlough and at the end of his leave he resigned his position. His father was now dead; and moreover, he was in love. Susan Augusta DeLancey, whom he married in 1811, came of a prominent landed family in Westchester County, New York—the scene of *The Spy* (1821). Some of the DeLanceys had been Tories during the Revolution—which probably accounts for the fairness with which in *The Spy* Cooper treats the Tories and the British. The marriage doubtless strengthened Cooper's social conservatism, though it seems to have left unchanged his political sympathies. During the remainder of his life—except for his seven years in Europe—Cooper led the life of a country gentleman either in Westchester County or in the vicinity of Cooperstown.

In her *Family Memories* Cooper's daughter Susan describes the incident that prompted him at the age of thirty to write his first novel:

"A new novel had been brought from England in the last monthly packet; it was I think one of Mrs. Opie's or one of that school. [It was apparently Jane Austen's *Persuasion*.] My mother was not well, she was lying on the sofa, and he was reading this newly imported novel to her; it must have been very trashy; after a chapter or two he threw it aside exclaiming, 'I could write you a better book myself.' Our mother laughed at the idea as at the height of absurdity—he who disliked writing even a letter, that he should write a book! He persisted in his declaration, however, and almost immediately wrote the first pages of a tale [*Precaution* (1820)] not yet named, the scene laid in England as a matter of course."

But for Mrs. Cooper's encouragement, the novel would probably never have been finished. Perhaps the author derived some encouragement from the fact that little Susan, hiding under a table, paid her tribute to the novelist's power by crying when a pathetic passage was read aloud to her mother. *Precaution* (1820)—for the publication of which Cooper had as a matter of course to pay out of his own pocket—was, as H. W. Boynton remarks in his biography, "a deliberate imitation of the pious-polite novel of Britain, feminine gender." Cooper was as far outside his proper field as he could well have got. Referring to his first two novels, he wrote in his *Letter to His Countrymen* (1834):

"Accident first made me a writer, and the same accident gave a direction to my pen. Ashamed to have fallen into the track of imitation, I endeavored to repair the wrong done to my own views, by producing a work that should be purely American, and of which love of country should be the theme."

The Spy (1821), which proved a remarkable success in England as well as in America, grew out of John Jay's story of an unnamed spy. Scott's historical romances, then at the height of their popularity, gave Cooper not so much a formula as a clue to a method of treating American life in fiction. The first volume of *The Spy* was actually set up in type before Cooper felt "a sufficient inducement to write a line of the second." In the Author's Introduction (1849) to a later edition of the story, Cooper pointed out a curious circumstance attending the writing of *The Spy*:

"As the second volume was slowly printing, from manuscript that was barely dry when it went into the compositor's hands, the publisher intimated that the work might grow to a length that would consume the profits. To set his mind at rest, the last chapter was actually written, printed, and paged, several weeks before the chapters which preceded it were even thought of."

The Pioneers (1823) was the first novel which Cooper wrote to please himself. In this, the first of the Leather-Stocking Tales, Cooper drew on his boyhood memories of the Coopers-town region. Here he introduced Natty Bumppo and Chingachgook, who in the later stories are treated less realistically. *The Pilot*, the first of Cooper's sea tales, had an accidental origin. At a dinner which Cooper attended in New York City in 1822 the company were discussing the new Scottish novel, *The Pirate* (1822), and speculating as to whether or not Scott was the author of this and the rest of the Waverley novels. The general opinion of the diners was that the author of *The Pirate* must have been a sailor; and hence that Scott could not be its author. Cooper vigorously dissented and maintained that *The Pirate* was the work of a landsman with no intimate knowledge of the sea or ships. When he went home, he said to Mrs. Cooper: "I must write one more book, a sea tale to show what can be done in this way by a sailor." Receiving little encouragement from friends who had seen the manuscript, he resolved to try it on his old sailor friend, William Shubrick. The result is best told in Cooper's own words:

"I read a chapter to Shubrick, which contained an account of a ship working off-shore in a gale. My listener betrayed interest as we proceeded, until he could no longer keep his seat. He paced the room furiously till I got through, and just as I laid down the paper he exclaimed, 'It's all very well, but you have let your jib stand too long, my fine fellow!'"

In *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) and *The Prairie* (1827) Cooper, at his wife's suggestion, resurrected Leather-Stocking and Chingachgook. *The Last of the Mohicans* differs widely from *The Pioneers*; it is an exciting romance of adventure. The weaker aspects of Leather-Stocking and Chingachgook are in abeyance, and the virtues of the frontier scout and the Indian warrior come to the front. Cooper is always at his best in describing a chase, whether on sea or land; and *The Last of the Mohicans* consists of two long pursuits with scant breathing space in the middle. The clue to Cooper's merits as a story-teller is suggested by H. W. Boynton:

"Never an artist, never self-critical or careful of his medium, he gained his powerful effects, like Byron, through the sheer vitality of his inspiration. He was the improvisatore, the story-teller in the bazaar, swept on by his own perhaps crude but certainly illumined sense of the romantic, the picturesque, the basically human-natural. His art, to which academic criticism has condescended for more than a century, was there [in *The Spy*], was living, still lives. You can no more destroy it by picking out its solecisms, its faults of haste, its banalities, than you can kill Byron's work in like manner."

The Prairie (1827), in which Leather-Stocking dies, was completed in Europe, whither Cooper had taken his family for a seven years' stay. His health was poor; he wished his daughters to learn French and Italian; and he hoped, in the absence of an international copyright law, to protect his rights to his books in Europe, where they were now extremely popular. In Europe Cooper was a staunch champion of his country. Irritated by the unfair accounts of America given by British travelers and reviewers, he tried to correct them in his *Notions of the Americans* (1828). He published three novels—*The Bravo* (1831), *The Heidenmauer* (1832), and *The Headsman* (1833)—to show his countrymen how European political systems contrasted with their own.

During the seven years Cooper lived abroad, the Jacksonian revolution had been accomplished; and on his return he found a different America from that which he had left. The reaction of the cosmopolitan novelist was not very dissimilar to that of Mrs. Trollope or Dickens. He put his shrewd and sensible criticism of American manners into *Homeward Bound* (1838) and *Home as Found* (1838), but his genius deserted him. If he had had the technique of a Sinclair Lewis, he might have written a better book than *Main Street* (1920). But Cooper could not write a good novel of manners, and he made the mistake of putting into *Home as Found* a petty squabble which he had with a certain element in Cooperstown. Cooper was right in his criticisms of American life, but his thin-skinned countrymen could not endure criticism, even from a popular American novelist. Much of his time in later years was spent in suing various newspapers for libel. He did a genuine but again unpopular service at a time when personalities and personal abuse filled the press. It was doubtless with these controversies in mind that Cooper requested that no biography of him be written.

Fortunately, he resumed the Leather-Stocking Tales with *The Pathfinder* (1840) and *The Deerslayer* (1841), which he considered better than the three earlier tales in the series. Cooper was a thorough gentleman, but for some reason he could seldom make his ladies and gentlemen live in his novels; nor are his middle-class characters much better. It is only the characters drawn from the humbler social circles that come to life in his pages—above all, his

Indians and his frontiersmen. In one of his delightful Roundabout Papers, "On a Peal of Bells," Thackeray wrote of Cooper's characters as compared with those of Scott:

"Much as I like those most unassuming, manly, unpretending gentlemen, I have to own that I think the heroes of another writer, viz.:

LEATHER-STOCKING,

UNCAS,

HARDHEART,

TOM COFFIN,

are quite the equals of Scott's men; perhaps Leather-Stocking is better than any one in 'Scott's lot.' *La Longue Carabine* is one of the great prize-men of fiction. He ranks with your Uncle Toby, Sir Roger de Coverley, Falstaff—heroic figures, all—American or British, and the artist has deserved well of his country who devised them."

The creation of great characters is perhaps the rarest and finest of literary achievements. Any second-rate writer of today could give Cooper lessons in the technique of narration or in style, but what living American writer can create such a character as Leather-Stocking? Hawkeye, to give him another name, is more typically American than one is likely to realize at first. When America entered the World War, a prominent Frenchman, wishing to find some symbol for the newly roused spirit of America, said, "The spirit of Leather-Stocking is awake."

For Cooper's life, see William Cullen Bryant's "Discourse on the Life and Genius of Cooper," *The Correspondence of James Fenimore-Cooper* (1922), and the biographies by T. R. Lounsbury (1883), H. W. Boynton (1931), Marcel Clavel (1938), and Robert E. Spiller, *Fenimore Cooper: Critic of His Times* (1931). There is an excellent bibliography by Spiller and P. C. Blackburn. See also Spiller's volume of selections (1936) in the American Writers Series. There is an excellent edition of *The Spy* by Tremaine McDowell and of *The Deerslayer* by Gregory Paine; the latter contains an excellent discussion of Cooper's Indians (see also Paine's article in *Studies in Philology*, XXIII, 16-39, January, 1926). The most notable critical essay on Cooper is in William Crary Brownell, *American Prose Masters* (1909). For further references, see Lewis Leary (ed.), *Articles on American Literature . . .* (1947).

[Leather-Stocking Kills His First
Indian]

from THE DEERSLAYER (1841)

The scene of *The Deerslayer* is Lake Otsego, on which Cooperstown now stands. Two white men have recently been captured by Indians. Deerslayer is the only white man left to defend two girls who live in Hutter's Muskrat Castle (the ark) in the middle of the lake. It is essential that he keep the In-

dians from seizing any of the boats belonging to the whites.

CHAPTER VII

"Clear, placid Leman! Thy contrasted lake
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
Thus quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction: once I loved

*Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a sister's voice reprov'd,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so
moved."*

BYRON.

Day had fairly dawned before the young man, whom we have left in the situation described in the last chapter, again opened his eyes. This was no sooner done, than he started up, and looked about him with the eagerness of one who suddenly felt the importance of accurately ascertaining his precise position. His rest had been deep and undisturbed; and when he awoke, it was with a clearness of intellect and a readiness of resources that were much needed at that particular moment. The sun had not risen, it is true, but the vault of heaven was rich with the winning softness that "brings and shuts the day," while the whole air was filled with the carols of birds, the hymns of the feathered tribe. These sounds first told Deerslayer the risks he ran. The air, for wind it could scarce be called, was still light, it is true, but it had increased a little in the course of the night, and as the canoes were mere feathers on the water, they had drifted twice the expected distance; and, what was still more dangerous, had approached so near the base of the mountain that here rose precipitously from the eastern shore, as to render the carols of the birds plainly audible. This was not the worst. The third canoe had taken the same direction, and was slowly drifting towards a point where it must inevitably touch, unless turned aside by a shift of wind, or human hands. In other respects, nothing presented itself to attract attention, or to awake alarm. The castle stood on its shoal, nearly abreast of the canoes, for the drifts had amounted to miles in the course of the night, and the ark lay fastened to its piles, as both had been left so many hours before.

As a matter of course, Deerslayer's attention was first given to the canoe ahead. It was already quite near the point, and a very few strokes of the paddle sufficed to tell him that it must touch before he could possibly overtake it. Just at this moment, too, the wind inopportunately freshened, rendering the drift of the light craft much more rapid than certain. Feeling the impossibility of preventing a contact with the land, the young man wisely determined not to heat himself with unnecessary exertions; but, first looking to the priming of his piece, he proceeded slowly and

warily towards the point, taking care to make a little circuit, that he might be exposed on only one side, as he approached.

The canoe adrift, being directed by no such intelligence, pursued its proper way, and grounded on a small sunken rock, at the distance of three or four yards from the shore. Just at that moment, Deerslayer had got abreast of the point, and turned the bows of his own boat to the land; first casting loose his tow, that his movements might be unencumbered. The canoe hung an instant on the rock; then it rose a hair's-breadth on an almost imperceptible swell of the water, swung round, floated clear, and reached the strand. All this the young man noted, but it neither quickened his pulses, nor hastened his hand. If any one had been lying in wait for the arrival of the waif, he must be seen, and the utmost caution in approaching the shore became indispensable; if no one was in ambush, hurry was unnecessary. The point being nearly diagonally opposite to the Indian encampment, he hoped the last, though the former was not only possible, but probable; for the savages were prompt in adopting all the expedients of their particular modes of warfare, and quite likely had many scouts searching the shores for craft to carry them off to the castle. As a glance at the lake from any height or projection, would expose the smallest object on its surface, there was little hope that either of the canoes would pass unseen; and Indian sagacity needed no instruction to tell which way a boat or a log would drift, when the direction of the wind was known. As Deerslayer drew nearer and nearer to the land, the stroke of his paddle grew slower, his eye became more watchful, and his ears and nostrils almost dilated with the effort to detect any lurking danger. 'Twas a trying moment for a novice, nor was there the encouragement which even the timid sometimes feel, when conscious of being observed and commended. He was entirely alone, thrown on his own resources, and was cheered by no friendly eye, emboldened by no encouraging voice. Notwithstanding all these circumstances, the most experienced veteran in forest warfare could not have conducted better. Equally free from recklessness and hesitation, his advance was marked by a sort of philosophical prudence, that appeared to render him superior to all motives but those which were best calculated to effect his purpose. Such was the commencement of a

career in forest exploits, that afterwards rendered this man, in his way, and under the limits of his habits and opportunities, as renowned as many a hero whose name has adorned the pages of works more celebrated than legends simple as ours can ever become.

When about a hundred yards from the shore, Deerslayer rose in the canoe, gave three or four vigorous strokes with the paddle, sufficient of themselves to impel the bark to land, and then quickly laying aside the instrument of labour, he seized that of war. He was in the very act of raising the rifle, when a sharp report was followed by the buzz of a bullet that passed so near his body, as to cause him involuntarily to start. The next instant Deerslayer staggered, and fell his whole length in the bottom of the canoe. A yell—it came from a single voice—followed, and an Indian leaped from the bushes upon the open area of the point, bounding towards the canoe. This was the moment the young man desired. He rose on the instant, and levelled his own rifle at his uncovered foe; but his finger hesitated about pulling the trigger on one whom he held at such a disadvantage. This little delay, probably, saved the life of the Indian, who bounded back into the cover as swiftly as he had broken out of it. In the meantime Deerslayer had been swiftly approaching the land, and his own canoe reached the point just as his enemy disappeared. As its movements had not been directed, it touched the shore a few yards from the other boat; and though the rifle of his foe had to be loaded, there was not time to secure his prize, and to carry it beyond danger, before he would be exposed to another shot. Under the circumstances, therefore, he did not pause an instant, but dashed into the woods and sought a cover.

On the immediate point there was a small open area, partly in native grass, and partly beach, but a dense fringe of bushes lined its upper side. This narrow belt of dwarf vegetation passed, one issued immediately into the high and gloomy vaults of the forest. The land was tolerably level for a few hundred feet, and then it rose precipitously in a mountainside. The trees were tall, large, and so free from under-brush, that they resembled vast columns, irregularly scattered, upholding a dome of leaves. Although they stood tolerably close together, for their ages and size, the eye could penetrate to considerable distances; and bodies of men, even, might have engaged

beneath their cover, with concert and intelligence.

Deerslayer knew that his adversary must be employed in re-loading, unless he had fled. The former proved to be the case, for the young man had no sooner placed himself behind a tree, than he caught a glimpse of the arm of the Indian, his body being concealed by an oak, in the very act of forcing the leathered bullet home. Nothing would have been easier than to spring forward, and decide the affair by a close assault on his unprepared foe; but every feeling of Deerslayer revolted at such a step, although his own life had just been attempted from a cover. He was yet unpractised in the ruthless expedients of savage warfare, of which he knew nothing except by tradition and theory, and it struck him as an unfair advantage to assail an unarmed foe. His colour had heightened, his eye frowned, his lips were compressed, and all his energies were collected and ready; but, instead of advancing to fire, he dropped his rifle to the usual position of a sportsman in readiness to catch his aim, and muttered to himself, unconscious that he was speaking—

"No, no—that may be red-skin warfare, but it's not a Christian's gifts. Let the miscreant charge, and then we'll take it out like men; for the canoe he *must* not, and *shall* not have. No, no; let him have time to load, and God will take care of the right!"

All this time the Indian had been so intent on his own movements, that he was even ignorant that his enemy was in the wood. His only apprehension was, that the canoe would be recovered and carried away, before he might be in readiness to prevent it. He had sought the cover from habit, but was within a few feet of the fringe of bushes, and could be at the margin of the forest, in readiness to fire, in a moment. The distance between him and his enemy was about fifty yards, and the trees were so arranged by nature that the line of sight was not interrupted, except by the particular trees behind which each party stood.

His rifle was no sooner loaded, than the savage glanced around him, and advanced incautiously as regarded the real, but stealthily as respected the fancied position of his enemy, until he was fairly exposed. Then Deerslayer stepped from behind his own cover, and hailed him.

"This-a-way, red-skin; this-a-way, if you're looking for me," he called out. "I'm young in war,

but not so young as to stand on an open beach to be shot down like an owl, by day-light. It rests on yourself whether it's peace, or war, atween us, for my gifts are white gifts, and I'm not one of them that thinks it valiant to slay human mortals, singly, in the woods."

The savage was a good deal startled by this sudden discovery of the danger he ran. He had a little knowledge of English, however, and caught the drift of the other's meaning. He was also too well schooled to betray alarm, but, dropping the butt of his rifle to the earth, with an air of confidence, he made a gesture of lofty courtesy. All this was done with the ease and self-possession of one accustomed to consider no man his superior. In the midst of this consummate acting, however, the volcano that raged within caused his eyes to glare, and his nostrils to dilate, like those of some wild beast that is suddenly prevented from taking the fatal leap.

"Two canoe," he said, in the deep guttural tones of his race, holding up the number of fingers he mentioned, by way of preventing mistakes; "one for you—one for me."

"No, no, Mingo, that will never do. You own neither; and neither shall you have, as long as I can prevent it. I know it's war atween your people and mine, but that's no reason why human mortals should slay each other, like savage creatures that meet in the woods; go your way, then, and leave me to go mine. The world is large enough for us both; and when we meet fairly in battle, why, the Lord will order the fate of each of us."

"Good!" exclaimed the Indian; "my brother missionary—great talk; all about Manitou."

"Not so—not so, warrior. I'm not good enough for the Moravians, and am too good for most of the other vagabonds that preach about in the woods. No, no, I'm only a hunter, as yet, though afore the peace is made, 'tis like enough there'll be occasion to strike a blow at some of your people. Still, I wish it to be done in fair fight, and not in a quarrel about the ownership of a miserable canoe."

"Good! My brother very young—but he very wise. Little warrior—great talker. Chief, sometimes, in council."

"I don't know this, nor do I say it, Indian," returned Deerslayer, colouring a little at the ill-concealed sarcasm of the other's manner; "I look forward to a life in the woods, and I only hope

it may be a peaceful one. All young men must go on the warpath, when there's occasion, but war isn't needfully massacre. I've seen enough of the last, this very night, to know that Providence frowns on it; and I now invite you to go your own way, while I go mine; and hope that we may part fri'nds."

"Good! My brother has two scalp—grey hair under t'other. Old wisdom—young tongue."

Here the savage advanced with confidence, his hand extended, his face smiling, and his whole bearing denoting amity and respect. Deerslayer met his offered friendship in a proper spirit, and they shook hands cordially, each endeavouring to assure the other of his sincerity and desire to be at peace.

"All have his own," said the Indian; "my canoe, mine; your canoe, your'n. Go look, if your'n, you keep; if mine, I keep."

"That's just, red-skin; though you must be wrong in thinking the canoe your property. Howsoever, seein' is believin', and we'll go down to the shore, where you may look with your own eyes; for it's likely you'll object to trustin' altogether to mine."

The Indian uttered his favourite exclamation of "good!" and then they walked side by side, towards the shore. There was no apparent distrust in the manner of either, the Indian moving in advance, as if he wished to show his companion that he did not fear turning his back to him. As they reached the open ground, the former pointed toward Deerslayer's boat, and said emphatically—

"No mine—pale-face canoe. *This* red-man's. No want other man's canoe—want his own."

"You're wrong, red-skin, you're altogether wrong. This canoe was left in old Hutter's keeping, and is his'n according to all law, red or white, till its owner comes to claim it. Here's the seats and the stitching of the bark to speak for themselves. No man ever know'd an Indian to turn off such work."

"Good! My brother little old—big wisdom. Indian no make him. White man's work."

"I'm glad you think so, for holding out to the contrary might have made ill blood atween us, every one having a right to take possession of his own. I'll just shove the canoe out of reach of dispute, at once, as the quickest way of settling difficulties."

While Deerslayer was speaking, he put a foot

against the end of the light boat, and giving a vigorous shove, he sent it out into the lake a hundred feet or more, where, taking the true current, it would necessarily float past the point, and be in no further danger of coming ashore. The savage started at this ready and decided expedient, and his companion saw that he cast a hurried and fierce glance at his own canoe, or that which contained the paddles. The change of manner, however, was but momentary, and then the Iroquois resumed his air of friendliness, and a smile of satisfaction.

"Good!" he repeated, with stronger emphasis than ever. "Young head, old mind. Know how to settle quarrel. Farewell, brother. He go to house in water—muskrat house—Indian go to camp, tell chiefs no find canoe."

Deerslayer was not sorry to hear this proposal, for he felt anxious to join the females, and he took the offered hand of the Indian very willingly. The parting words were friendly, and, while the red-man walked calmly towards the wood, with the rifle in the hollow of his arm, without once looking back in uneasiness or distrust, the white man moved towards the remaining canoe, carrying his piece in the same pacific manner, it is true, but keeping his eyes fastened on the movements of the other. This distrust, however, seemed to be altogether uncalled for, and, as if ashamed to have entertained it, the young man averted his look, and stepped carelessly up to his boat. Here he began to push the canoe from the shore, and to make his other preparations for departing. He might have been thus employed for a minute, when, happening to turn his face towards the land, his quick and certain eye told him, at a glance, the imminent jeopardy in which his life was placed. The black, ferocious eyes of the savage were glancing on him, like those of the crouching tiger, through a small opening in the bushes, and the muzzle of his rifle seemed already to be opening in a line with his own body.

Then, indeed, the long practice of Deerslayer, as a hunter, did him good service. Accustomed to fire with the deer on the bound, and often when the precise position of the animal's body had in a manner to be guessed at, he used the same expedients here. To cock and poise his rifle were the acts of a single moment, and a single motion; then, aiming almost without sighting, he fired

into the bushes where he knew a body ought to be, in order to sustain the appalling countenance, which alone was visible. There was not time to raise the piece any higher, or to take a more deliberate aim. So rapid were his movements, that both parties discharged their pieces at the same instant, the concussions mingling in one report. The mountains, indeed, gave back but a single echo. Deerslayer dropped his piece, and stood, with head erect, steady as one of the pines in the calm of a June morning, watching the result; while the savage gave the yell that has become historical for its appalling influence, leaped through the bushes, and came bounding across the open ground, flourishing a tomahawk. Still Deerslayer moved not, but stood with his unloaded rifle fallen against his shoulders, while, with a hunter's habits, his hands were mechanically feeling for the powder-horn and charger. When about forty feet from his enemy, the savage hurled his keen weapon; but it was with an eye so vacant, and a hand so unsteady and feeble, that the young man caught it by the handle, as it was flying past him. At that instant the Indian staggered and fell his whole length on the ground.

"I know'd it—I know'd it!" exclaimed Deerslayer, who was already preparing to force a fresh bullet into his rifle; "I know'd it must come to this, as soon as I had got the range from the creature's eyes. A man sights suddenly, and fires quick, when his own life's in danger; yes, I know'd it would come to this. I was about the hundredth part of a second too quick for him; or it might have been bad for me! The riptyle's bullet has just grazed my side—but, say what you will, for or aga'in 'em, a red-skin is by no means as sartain with powder and ball as a white man. Their gifts don't seem to lie that-a-way. Even Chingachgook, great as he is in other matters, isn't downright deadly with the rifle."

By this time the piece was reloaded, and Deerslayer, after tossing the tomahawk into the canoe, advanced to his victim, and stood over him, leaning on his rifle, in melancholy attention. It was the first instance in which he had seen a man fall in battle—it was the first fellow-creature against whom he had ever seriously raised his own hand. The sensations were novel; and regret, with the freshness of our better feelings, mingled with his triumph. The Indian was not dead, though shot directly through the body. He

lay on his back motionless, but his eyes, now full of consciousness, watched each action of his victor—as the fallen bird regards the fowler—jealous of every movement. The man probably expected the fatal blow which was to precede the loss of his scalp; or, perhaps he anticipated that this latter act of cruelty would precede his death. Deerslayer read his thoughts; and he found a melancholy satisfaction in relieving the apprehensions of the helpless savage.

“No, no, red-skin,” he said; “you’ve nothing more to fear from me. I am of a Christian stock, and scalping is not of my gifts. I’ll just make sartin of your rifle, and then come back and do you what sarvice I can. Though here I can’t stay much longer, as the crack of three rifles will be apt to bring some of your devils down upon me.”

The close of this was said in a sort of soliloquy, as the young man went in quest of the fallen rifle. The piece was found where its owner had dropped it, and was immediately put into the canoe. Laying his own rifle at its side, Deerslayer then returned and stood over the Indian again.

“All inimity atween you and me’s at an ind, red-skin,” he said; “and you may set your heart at rest, on the score of the scalp, or any further injury. My gifts are white, as I’ve told you; and I hope my conduct will be white also!”

Could looks have conveyed all they meant, it is probable Deerslayer’s innocent vanity, on the subject of colour would have been rebuked a little; but he comprehended the gratitude that was expressed in the eyes of the dying savage, without in the least detecting the bitter sarcasm that struggled with the better feeling.

“Water!” ejaculated the thirsty and unfortunate creature; “give poor Indian water.”

“Ay, water you shall have, if you drink the lake dry. I’ll just carry you down to it, that you may take your fill. This is the way, they tell me, with all wounded people—water is their greatest comfort and delight.”

So saying, Deerslayer raised the Indian in his arms, and carried him to the lake. Here he first helped him to take an attitude in which he could appease his burning thirst; after which he seated himself on a stone, and took the head of his wounded adversary in his own lap, and endeavoured to soothe his anguish, in the best manner he could.

“It would be sinful to me to tell you your time

hadn’t come, warrior,” he commenced, “and therefore I’ll not say it. You’ve passed the middle age, already, and, considerin’ the sort of lives ye lead, your days have been pretty well filled. The principal thing, now, is to look forward to what comes next. Neither red-skin nor pale-face, on the whole, calculates much on sleepin’ for ever; but both expect to live in another world. Each has his gifts, and will be judged by ’em, and, I suppose, you’ve thought these matters over enough, not to stand in need of sarmons if you’ve been a just Indian; if an unjust, you’ll meet your desarts in another way I’ve my own idees about these things; but you’re too old and exper’enced to need any explanations from one as young as I.”

“Good!” ejaculated the Indian, whose voice retained its depth even as life ebbed away; “young head—old wisdom!”

“It’s sometimes a consolation, when the ind comes, to know that them we’ve harmed, or *tried* to harm, forgive us. I suppose natur’ seeks this relief, by way of getting a pardon on ’arth; as we never can know whether He pardons, who is all in all, till judgment itself comes. It’s soothing to know that *any* pardon, at such times; and that, I conclude, is the secret. Now, as for myself, I overlook altogether your designs ag’in my life; first, because no harm came of ’em; next, because it’s your gifts, and natur’, and trainin’, and I ought not to have trusted you at all; and, finally and chiefly, because I can bear no ill-will to a dying man, whether heathen or Christian. So put your heart at ease, so far as I’m concerned; you know best what other matters ought to trouble you, or what ought to give you satisfaction, in so trying a moment.”

It is probable that the Indian had some of the fearful glimpses of the unknown state of being which God, in mercy, seems, at times, to afford to all the human race; but they were necessarily in conformity with his habits and prejudices. Like most of his people, and like too many of our own, he thought more of dying in a way to gain applause among those he left, than to secure a better state of existence, hereafter. While Deerslayer was speaking, his mind was a little bewildered, though he felt that the intention was good; and when he had done, a regret passed over his spirit that none of his own tribe were present to witness his stoicism, under extreme bodily suf-

fering, and the firmness with which he met his end. With the high, innate courtesy that so often distinguishes the Indian warrior, before he becomes corrupted by too much intercourse with the worst class of the white men, he endeavoured to express his thankfulness for the other's good intentions, and to let him understand that they were appreciated.

"Good!" he repeated, for this was an English word much used by the savages—"good—young head; young *heart*, too. *Old* heart tough; no shed tear. Hear Indian when he die, and no want to lie—what he call him?"

"Deerslayer is the name I bear now, though the Delawares have said that when I get back from this war-path I shall have a more manly title, provided I can 'arn one."

"That good name for boy—poor name for warrior. He get better quick. No fear *there*"—the savage had strength sufficient, under the strong excitement he felt, to raise a hand and tap the young man on his breast—"eye sartain—finger lightening—aim, death—great warrior soon. No Deerslayer—Hawkeye—Hawkeye—Hawkeye. Shake hand."

Deerslayer—or Hawkeye, as the youth was then first named, for in after years he bore the appellation throughout all that region—Deerslayer took the hand of the savage, whose last breath was drawn in that attitude, gazing in admiration at the countenance of a stranger, who had shown so much readiness, skill and firmness, in a scene that was equally trying and novel. When the reader remembers it is the highest gratification an Indian can receive to see his enemy betray weakness, he will be better able to appreciate the conduct which had extorted so great a concession, at such a moment.

"His spirit has fled!" said Deerslayer, in a suppressed, melancholy voice. "Ah's me—Well, to this we must all come, sooner or later; and he is happiest, let his skin be of what colour it may, who is best fitted to meet it. Here lies the body of, no doubt, a brave warrior, and the soul is already flying towards its heaven, or hell, whether that be a happy hunting-ground, a place scant of game; regions of glory, according to Moravian doctrine, or flames of fire! So it happens, too, as regards other matters! Here have old Hutter and Hurry Harry got themselves into difficulty, if they haven't got themselves into torment and death, and all for a bounty that luck offers to me

in what many would think a lawful and suitable manner. But not a farthing of such money shall cross my hand. White I was born, and white will I die; clinging to colour to the last, even though the King's Majesty, his governors, and all his councils, both at home and in the Colonies, forget from what they come, and where they hope to go, and all for a little advantage in warfare. No, no—warrior, hand of mine shall never molest your scalp, and so your soul may rest in peace on the p'int of making a decent appearance, when the body comes to join it, in your own land of spirits."

Deerslayer arose as soon as he had spoken. Then he placed the body of the dead man in a sitting posture, with its back against the little rock, taking the necessary care to prevent it from falling, or in any way settling into an attitude that might be thought unseemly by the sensitive, though wild notions of a savage. When this duty was performed, the young man stood gazing at the grim countenance of his fallen foe, in a sort of melancholy abstraction. As was his practice, however, a habit gained by living so much alone in the forest, he then began again to give utterance to his thoughts and feelings aloud.

"I didn't wish your life, red-skin," he said, "but you left me no choice atween killing, or being killed. Each party acted according to his gifts, I suppose, and blame can light on neither. You were treacherous, according to your natur' in war, and I was a little oversightful, as I'm apt to be in trusting others. Well, this is my first battle with a human mortal, though it's not likely to be the last. I have fou't most of the creatur's of the forest, such as bears, wolves, painters and catamounts, but this is the beginning with the redskins. If I was Indian born, now, I might tell of this, or carry in the scalp, and boast of the expl'ite afore the whole tribe; or, if my inimy had only been even a bear, 'twould have been nat'ral and proper to let every body know what had happened; but I don't well see how I'm to let even Chingachgook into this secret, so long as it can be done only by boasting with a white tongue. And why should I wish to boast of it, after all? It's slaying a human, although he was a savage; and how do I know that he was a just Indian; and that he has not been taken away suddenly, to any thing but happy hunting-grounds? When it's onsartain whether good or evil has been done, the wisest way is not to be boastful—still, I *should*

like Chingachgook to know that I haven't discredited the Delawares, or my training!" ---

[The Death of Leather-Stocking]

from THE PRAIRIE (1827)

CHAPTER XXXIV

The Prairie begins and ends with a sunset. The opening chapter may have been in the mind of Edwin Arlington Robinson when he wrote his fine ode, "The Man against the Sky." Thackeray's account of the death of Colonel Newcome is reminiscent of Cooper's impressive description of Leather-Stocking's death. Middleton is a soldier whose wife Leather-Stocking (the trapper) has helped to rescue from kidnappers. Hard-Heart is the Indian hero—an Uncas of the prairies—who has adopted Leather-Stocking as his father.

"Methought I heard a voice."

SHAKESPEARE.

--- When they entered the town, its inhabitants were seen collected in an open space, where they were arranged with the customary deference to age and rank. The whole formed a large circle, in the centre of which were perhaps a dozen of the principal chiefs. Hard-Heart waved his hand as he approached, and, as the mass of bodies opened, he rode through, followed by his companions. Here they dismounted; and as the beasts were led apart, the strangers found themselves environed by a thousand grave, composed, but solicitous faces.

Middleton gazed about him in growing concern, for no cry, no song, no shout welcomed him among a people, from whom he had so lately parted with regret. His uneasiness, not to say apprehensions, was shared by all his followers. Determination and stern resolution began to assume the place of anxiety in every eye, as each man silently felt for his arms, and assured himself that his several weapons were in a state for service. But there was no answering symptom of hostility on the part of their hosts. Hard-Heart beckoned for Middleton and Paul to follow, leading the way towards the cluster of forms that occupied the centre of the circle. Here the visitors found a solution of all the movements which had given them so much reason for apprehension.

The trapper was placed on a rude seat, which had been made, with studied care, to support his frame in an upright and easy attitude. The first glance of the eye told his former friends

that the old man was at length called upon to pay the last tribute of nature. His eye was glazed, and apparently as devoid of sight as of expression. His features were a little more sunken and strongly marked than formerly, but there all change, so far as exterior was concerned, might he said to have ceased. His approaching end was not to be ascribed to any positive disease, but had been a gradual and mild decay of the physical powers. Life, it is true, still lingered in his system; but it was as if at times entirely ready to depart, and then it would appear to reanimate the sinking form, reluctant to give up the possession of a tenement that had never been corrupted by vice or undermined by disease. It would have been no violent fancy to have imagined that the spirit fluttered about the placid lips of the old woodsman, reluctant to depart from a shell that had so long given it an honest and honorable shelter.

His body was placed so as to let the light of the setting sun fall full upon the solemn features. His head was bare, the long, thin, locks of gray fluttering lightly in the evening breeze. His rifle lay upon his knee, and the other accouterments of the chase were placed at his side, within reach of his hand. Between his feet lay the figure of a hound, with its head crouching to the earth, as if it slumbered; and so perfectly easy and natural was its position that a second glance was necessary to tell Middleton he saw only the skin of Hector, stuffed, by Indian tenderness and ingenuity, in a manner to represent the living animal. His own dog was playing at a distance with the child of Tachechana and Mahtoree. The mother herself stood at hand, holding in her arms a second offspring, that might boast of a parentage no less honorable than that which belonged to the son of Hard-Heart. Le Balafre was seated nigh the dying trapper, with every mark about his person that the hour of his own departure was not far distant. The rest of those immediately in the centre were aged men, who had apparently drawn near in order to observe the manner in which a just and fearless warrior would depart on the greatest of his journeys.

The old man was reaping the rewards of a life remarkable for temperance and activity, in a tranquil and placid death. His vigor in a manner endured to the very last. Decay, when it did occur, was rapid, but free from pain. He had

hunted with the tribe in the spring, and even throughout most of the summer; when his limbs suddenly refused to perform their customary offices. A sympathizing weakness took possession of all his faculties; and the Pawnees believed that they were going to lose, in this unexpected manner, a sage and counsellor whom they had begun both to love and respect. But, as we have already said, the immortal occupant seemed unwilling to desert its tenement. The lamp of life flickered, without becoming extinguished. On the morning of the day on which Middleton arrived, there was a general reviving of the powers of the whole man. His tongue was again heard in wholesome maxims, and his eye from time to time recognized the persons of his friends. It merely proved to be a brief and final intercourse with the world on the part of one who had already been considered, as to mental communion, to have taken his leave of it forever.

When he had placed his guests in front of the dying man, Hard-Heart, after a pause that proceeded as much from sorrow as decorum, leaned a little forward, and demanded:

"Does my father hear the words of his son?"

"Speak," returned the trapper, in tones that issued from his chest, but which were rendered awfully distinct by the stillness that reigned in the place. "I am about to depart from the village of the Loups, and shortly shall be beyond the reach of your voice."

"Let the wise chief have no cares for his journey," continued Hard-Heart, with an earnest solicitude that led him to forget, for the moment, that others were waiting to address his adopted parent; "a hundred Loups shall clear his path from briars."

"Pawnee, I die, as I have lived, a Christian man!" resumed the trapper, with a force of voice that had the same startling effect on his hearers as is produced by the trumpet, when its blast rises suddenly and freely on the air after its obstructed sounds have been heard struggling in the distance; "as I came into life so will I leave it. Horses and arms are not needed to stand in the presence of the Great Spirit of my people. He knows my color, and according to my gifts will he judge my deeds."

"My father will tell my young men how many Mingos he has struck, and what acts of valor and justice he has done, that they may know how to imitate him."

"A boastful tongue is not heard in the heaven of a white man!" solemnly returned the old man. "What I have done, He has seen. His eyes are always open. That which has been well done will He remember, wherein I have been wrong will He not forget to chastise, though He will do the same in mercy. No, my son; a pale-face may not sing his own praises, and hope to have them acceptable before his God!"

A little disappointed, the young partisan stepped modestly back, making way for the recent comers to approach. Middleton took one of the meagre hands of the trapper, and struggling to command his voice, he succeeded in announcing his presence.

The old man listened like one whose thoughts were dwelling on a very different subject; but when the other had succeeded in making him understand that he was present, an expression of joyful recognition passed over his faded features.

"I hope you have not so soon forgotten those whom you so materially served!" Middleton concluded. "It would pain me to think my hold on your memory was so light."

"Little that I have ever seen is forgotten," returned the trapper: "I am at the close of many weary days, but there is not one among them all that I could wish to overlook. I remember you, with the whole of your company; ay, and your gran'ther, that went before you. I am glad that you have come back upon these plains, for I had need of one who speaks the English, since little faith can be put in the traders of these regions. Will you do a favor to an old and dying man?"

"Name it," said Middleton; "it shall be done."

"It is a far journey to send such trifles," resumed the old man, who spoke at short intervals, as strength and breath permitted; "a far and weary journey is the same; but kindnesses and friendships are things not to be forgotten. There is a settlement among the Otsego hills —"

"I know the place," interrupted Middleton, observing that he spoke with increasing difficulty; "proceed to tell me what you would have done."

"Take this rifle, and pouch, and horn, and send them to the person whose name is graven on the plates of the stock,—a trader cut the letters with his knife,—for it is long that I have intended to send him such a token of my love!"

"It shall be so. Is there more that you could wish?"

"Little else have I to bestow. My traps I give to my Indian son; for honestly and kindly has he kept his faith. Let him stand before me."

Middleton explained to the chief what the trapper had said, and relinquished his own place to the other.

"Pawnee," continued the old man, always changing his language to suit the person he addressed, and not unfrequently according to the ideas he expressed, "it is a custom of my people for the father to leave his blessing with the son before he shuts his eyes forever. This blessing I give to you; take it; for the prayers of a Christian man will never make the path of a just warrior to the blessed prairies either longer or more tangled. May the God of a white man look on your deeds with friendly eyes, and may you never commit an act that shall cause him to darken his face. I know not whether we shall ever meet again. There are many traditions concerning the place of Good Spirits. It is not for one like me, old and experienced though I am, to set up my opinion against a nation's. You believe in the blessed prairies, and I have faith in the sayings of my fathers. If both are true, our parting will be final; but if it should prove that the same meaning is hid under different words, we shall yet stand together, Pawnee, before the face of your Wahcondah, who will then be no other than my God. There is much to be said in favor of both religions, for each seems suited to its own people, and no doubt it was so intended. I fear I have not altogether followed the gifts of my color, inasmuch as I find it a little painful to give up forever the use of the rifle, and the comforts of the chase. But then the fault has been my own, seeing that it could not have been His. Ay, Hector," he continued, leaning forward a little, and feeling for the ears of the hound, "our parting has come at last, dog, and it will be a long hunt. You have been an honest, and a bold, and a faithful hound. Pawnee, you cannot slay the pup on my grave, for where a Christian dog falls there he lies forever; but you can be kind to him after I am gone, for the love you bear his master."

"The words of my father are in my ears," returned the young partisan, making a grave and respectful gesture of assent.

"Do you hear what the chief has promised,

dog?" demanded the trapper, making an effort to attract the notice of the insensible effigy of his hound. Receiving no answering look, nor hearing any friendly whine, the old man felt for the mouth, and endeavored to force his hand between the cold lips. The truth then flashed upon him, although he was far from perceiving the whole extent of the deception. Falling back in his seat, he hung his head, like one who felt a severe and unexpected shock. Profiting by this momentary forgetfulness, two young Indians removed the skin with the same delicacy of feeling that had induced them to attempt the pious fraud

"The dog is dead!" muttered the trapper, after a pause of many minutes; "a hound has his time as well as a man, and well has he filled his days! Captain," he added, making an effort to wave his hand for Middleton, "I am glad you have come; for though kind, and well-meaning according to the gifts of their color, these Indians are not the men to lay the head of a white man in his grave. I have been thinking, too, of this dog at my feet, it will not do to set forth the opinion that a Christian can expect to meet his hound again; still there can be little harm in placing what is left of so faithful a servant nigh the bones of his master."

"It shall be as you desire."

"I'm glad you think with me in this matter. In order, to save labor, lay the pup at my feet; or for that matter, put him side by side. A hunter need never be ashamed to be found in company with his dog!"

"I charge myself with your wish."

The old man made a long and apparently a musing pause. At times he raised his eyes wistfully, as if he would again address Middleton, but some innate feeling appeared always to suppress his words. The other, who observed his hesitation, inquired in a way most likely to encourage him to proceed, whether there was aught else that he could wish to have done.

"I am without kith or kin in the wide world!" the trapper answered; "when I am gone there will be an end of my race. We have never been chiefs; but honest, and useful in our way, I hope it cannot be denied we have always proved ourselves. My father lies buried near the sea, and the bones of his son will whiten on the prairie—"

"Name the spot, and your remains shall be

placed by the side of your father," interrupted Middleton.

"Not so, not so, captain Let me sleep where I have lived,—beyond the din of the settlements! Still I see no need why the grave of an honest man should be hid, like a red-skin in his ambush-ment. I paid a man in the settlements to make and put a graven stone at the head of my father's restingplace. It was of the value of twelve beaverskins, and cunningly and curiously was it carved! Then it told to all comers that the body of such a Christian lay beneath; and it spoke of his manner of life, of his years, and of his honesty. When we had done with the Frenchers in the old war I made a journey to the spot, in order to see that all was rightly performed, and glad I am to say, the workman had not forgotten his faith."

"And such a stone you would have at your grave?"

"I! no, no, I have no son but Hard-Heart, and it is little that an Indian knows of white fashions and usages Besides, I am his debtor already, seeing it is so little I have done since I have lived in his tribe. The rifle might bring the value of such a thing—but then I know it will give the boy pleasure to hang the piece in his hall, for many is the deer and the bird that he has seen it destroy. No, no, the gun must be sent to him whose name is graven on the lock!"

"But there is one who would gladly prove his affection in the way you wish,—he who owes you not only his own deliverance from so many dangers, but who inherits a heavy debt of gratitude from his ancestors. The stone shall be put at the head of your grave."

The old man extended his emaciated hand, and gave the other a squeeze of thanks.

"I thought you might be willing to do it, but I was backward in asking the favor," he said, "seeing that you are not of my kin. Put no boastful words on the same, but just the name, the age, and the time of death, with something from the Holy Book; no more, no more. My name will then not be altogether lost on 'arth; I need no more."

Middleton intimated his assent, and then followed a pause that was only broken by distant and broken sentences from the dying man. He appeared now to have closed his accounts with the world, and to await merely for the final

summons to quit it Middleton and Hard-Heart placed themselves on the opposite sides of his seat, and watched with melancholy solicitude the variations of his countenance. For two hours there was no very sensible alteration. The expression of his faded and time-worn features was that of a calm and dignified repose From time to time he spoke, uttering some brief sentence in the way of advice, or asking some simple questions concerning those in whose fortunes he still took a friendly interest. During the whole of that solemn and anxious period each individual of the tribe kept his place, in the most self-restrained patience. When the old man spoke, all bent their heads to listen; and when his words were uttered, they seemed to ponder on their wisdom and usefulness.

As the flame drew nigher to the socket his voice was hushed, and there were moments when his attendants doubted whether he still belonged to the living. Middleton, who watched each wavering expression of his weather-beaten visage with the interest of a keen observer of human nature, softened by the tenderness of personal regard, fancied he could read the workings of the old man's soul in the strong lineaments of his countenance. Perhaps what the enlightened soldier took for the delusion of mistaken opinion did actually occur—for who has returned from that unknown world to explain by what forms, and in what manner, he was introduced into its awful precincts? Without pretending to explain what must ever be a mystery to the quick, we shall simply relate facts as they occurred.

The trapper had remained nearly motionless for an hour. His eyes alone had occasionally opened and shut. When opened, his gaze seemed fastened on the clouds which hung around the western horizon, reflecting the bright colors, and giving form and loveliness to the glorious tints of an American sunset. The hour—the calm beauty of the season—the occasion, all conspired to fill the spectators with solemn awe. Suddenly, while musing on the remarkable position in which he was placed, Middleton felt the hand which he held grasp his own with incredible power, and the old man, supported on either side by his friends, rose upright to his feet. For a moment he looked about him, as if to invite all in presence to listen (the lingering remnant of human frailty), and then, with a fine military

elevation of the head, and with a voice that might be heard in every part of that numerous assembly, he pronounced the word —
"Here!"

A movement so entirely unexpected, and the air of grandeur and humility which were so remarkably united in the mien of the trapper, together with the clear and uncommon force of his utterance, produced a short period of confusion in the faculties of all present. When Middleton and Hard-Heart, each of whom had involuntarily extended a hand to support the form of the old man, turned to him again, they found that the subject of their interest was removed forever beyond the necessity of their care. They mournfully placed the body in its seat, and Le Balafré arose to announce the termination of the scene to the tribe. The voice of the old Indian seemed a sort of echo from that invisible world to which the meek spirit of the trapper had just departed.

"A valiant, a just, and a wise warrior has gone on the path which will lead him to the blessed grounds of his people!" he said. "When the voice of the Wahcondah called him, he was ready to answer. Go, my children; remember the just chief of the pale-faces, and clear your own tracks from briers!"

The grave was made beneath the shade of some noble oaks. It has been carefully watched to the present hour by the Pawnees of the Loup, and is often shown to the traveller and the trader as a spot where a just white man sleeps. In due time the stone was placed at its head, with the simple inscription which the trapper had himself requested. The only liberty taken by Middleton was to add, "May no wanton hand ever disturb his remains!"

from THE AMERICAN DEMOCRAT
(1838)

ON THE PRIVATE DUTIES OF STATION

Apart from his novels, *The American Democrat* is perhaps the most interesting of Cooper's books. It is a direct and simple statement of his political and social creed, his belief that, as Robert E. Spiller puts it, "an aristocracy of social worth and private property is essential in a political democracy if litera-

ture and the other amenities are to survive." "There is no doubt that, in general," wrote Cooper, "America has retrograded in manners within the last thirty years." The following passage might easily have been written by almost any American prose writer between 1918 and 1939.

"The tendency of democracies is, in all things, to mediocrity, since the tastes, knowledge and principles of the majority form the tribunal of appeal. This circumstance, while it certainly serves to elevate the average qualities of a nation, renders the introduction of a high standard difficult. Thus do we find in literature, the arts, architecture and in all acquired knowledge, a tendency in America to gravitate towards the common centers in this, as in other things; lending a value and estimation to mediocrity that are not elsewhere given."

In a sympathetic introduction to a new edition of *The American Democrat* in 1931, H. L. Mencken comments:

"He saw clearly how democracy warred upon the free functioning of genuinely superior men—how it kept them out of public life, and so forced them into silence and sterility, and robbed the commonwealth of their sense and decency. And he saw as clearly how the rule of the majority must tend toward a witless and malignant tyranny, anti-social in its motives and evil almost beyond endurance in its effects."

- - - The social duties of a gentleman are of a high order. The class to which he belongs is the natural repository of the manners, tastes, tone, and, to a certain extent, of the principles of a country. They who imagine this portion of the community useless, drones who consume without producing, have not studied society, or they have listened to the suggestions of personal envy, instead of consulting history and facts. If the laborer is indispensable to civilization, so is also the gentleman. While the one produces, the other directs his skill to those arts which raise the polished man above the barbarian. The last brings his knowledge and habits to bear upon industry, and, taking the least favorable view of his claims, the indulgence of his very luxuries encourages the skill that contributes to the comforts of the lowest.

Were society to be satisfied with a mere supply of the natural wants, there would be no civilization. The savage condition attains this much. All beyond it, notwithstanding, is so much progress made in the direction of the gentleman, and has been made either at the suggestions, or by the encouragement of those whose means have enabled,

and whose tastes have induced them to buy. Knowledge is as necessary to the progress of a people as physical force, for, with our knowledge, the beasts of burthen who now toil for man, would soon compel man to toil for them. If the head is necessary to direct the body, so is the head of society, (the head in a social, if not in a political sense), necessary to direct the body of society.

Any one may learn the usefulness of a body of enlightened men in a neighborhood, by tracing their influence on its civilization. Where many such are found, the arts are more advanced, and men learn to see that there are tastes more desirable than those of the mere animal. In such a neighborhood they acquire habits which contribute to their happiness by advancing their intellect, they learn the value of refinement in their intercourse, and obtain juster notions of the nature and real extent of their rights. He who would honor learning, and taste, and sentiment, and refinement of every sort, ought to respect its possessors, and, in all things but those which affect rights, defer to their superior advantages. This is the extent of the deference that is due from him who is not a gentleman, to him who is; but this much is due.

On the other hand, the social duties of an American gentleman, in particular, require of him a tone of feeling and a line of conduct that are of the last importance to the country. One of the first of his obligations is to be a guardian of the liberties of his fellow citizens. It is peculiarly graceful in the American, whom the accidents of life have raised above the mass of the nation, to show himself conscious of his duties in this respect, by asserting at all times the true principles of government, avoiding, equally, the cant of demagogueism with the impracticable theories of visionaries, and the narrow and selfish dogmas of those who would limit power by castes. They who do not see and feel the importance of possessing a class of such men in a community, to give it tone, a high and far sighted policy, and lofty views in general, can know little of history, and have not reflected on the inevitable consequences of admitted causes.

The danger to the institutions of denying to men of education their proper place in society, is derived from the certainty that no political system can long continue in which this violence

is done to the natural rights of a class so powerful. It is as unjust to require that men of refinement and training should defer in their habits and associations to the notions of those who are their inferiors in these particulars, as it is to insist that political power should be the accompaniment of birth. All, who are in the least cultivated, know how irksome and oppressive is the close communion with ignorance and vulgarity, and the attempt to push into the ordinary associations, the principles of equality that do and ought to govern states in their political characters, is, virtually, an effort to subvert a just general maxim, by attaching to it impracticable consequences.

Whenever the enlightened, wealthy, and spirited of an affluent and great country, seriously conspire to subvert democratical institutions, their leisure, money, intelligence and means of combining, will be found too powerful for the ill-directed and conflicting efforts of the mass. It is therefore, all important, to enlist a portion of this class, at least, in the cause of freedom, since its power at all times renders it a dangerous enemy.

Liberality is peculiarly the quality of a gentleman. He is liberal in his attainments, opinions, practices and concessions. He asks for himself, no more than he is willing to concede to others. He feels that his superiority is in his attainments, practices and principles, which if they are not always moral, are above meanness, and he has usually no pride in the mere vulgar consequence of wealth. Should he happen to be well born, (for birth is by no means indispensable to the character,) his satisfaction is in being allied to men of the same qualities as himself, and not to a senseless pride in an accident. The vulgar-minded mistake motives that they cannot feel; but he, at least, is capable of distinguishing between things that are false, and the things which make him what he is.

An eminent writer of our own time, has said in substance, that a nation is happy, in which the people, possessing the power to select their rulers, select the noble. This was the opinion of a European, who had been accustomed to see the liberal qualities in the exclusive possession of a caste, and who was not accustomed to see the people sufficiently advanced to mingle in affairs of state. Power cannot be extended to a *caste*,

without *caste's* reaping its principal benefit; but happy, indeed, is the nation, in which, power being the common property, there is sufficient discrimination and justice to admit the intelligent and refined to a just participation of its influence.

ON CIVILIZATION

--- There is a familiar and too much despised branch of civilization, of which the population of this country is singularly and unhappily ignorant; that of cookery. The art of eating and drinking, is one of those on which more depends, perhaps, than on any other, since health, activity of mind, constitutional enjoyments, even learning, refinement, and, to a certain degree, morals, are all, more or less, connected with our diet. The Americans are the grossest feeders of any civilized nation known. As a nation, their food is heavy, coarse, ill prepared and indigestible, while it is taken in the least artificial forms that cookery will allow. The predominance of grease in the American kitchen, coupled with the habits of hasty eating and of constant expectoration, are the causes of the diseases of the stomach so common in America. The science of the table extends far beyond the indulgence of our appetites, as the school of manners includes health and morals, as well as that which is agreeable. Vegetable diet is almost converted into an injury in America, from an ignorance of the best modes of preparation, while even animal food is much abused, and loses half its nutriment.

The same is true as respects liquors. The heating and exciting wines, the brandies, and the coarser drinks of the laboring classes, all conspire to injure the physical and the moral man, while they defeat their own ends.

These are points of civilization on which this country has yet much to learn, for while the tables of the polished and cultivated partake of the abundance of the country, and wealth has even found means to introduce some knowledge of the kitchen, there is not perhaps on the face of the globe, the same number of people among whom the good things of the earth are so much abused, or ignorantly wasted, as among the people of the United States. National character is, in some measure, affected by a knowledge of the art of preparing food, there being as good rea-

son to suppose that man is as much affected by diet as any other animal, and it is certain that the connection between our moral and physical qualities is so intimate as to cause them to react on each other.

ON INDIVIDUALITY

Individuality is the aim of political liberty. By leaving to the citizen as much freedom of action and of being, as comports with order and the rights of others, the institutions render him truly a freeman. He is left to pursue his means of happiness in his own manner.

It is a curious circumstance, that, in endeavouring to secure the popular rights, an effect has been produced in this country totally opposed to this main object. Men have been so long accustomed to see oppression exercised in the name of one, or in the name of a few, that they have got to consider the sway of numbers as the only criterion of freedom. Numbers, however, may oppress as well as one or a few, and when such oppression occurs, it is usually of the worst character.

The habit of seeing the public rule, is gradually accustoming the American mind to an interference with private rights that is slowly undermining the individuality of the national character. There is getting to be so much public right, that private right is overshadowed and lost. A danger exists that the ends of liberty will be forgotten altogether in the means.

All greatness of character is dependant on individuality. The man who has no other existence than that which he partakes in common with all around him, will never have any other than an existence of mediocrity. In time, such a state of things would annihilate invention and paralyze genius. A nation would become a nation of common place labourers.

The pursuit of happiness is inseparable from the claims of individuality. To compel all to follow this object in the same manner, is to oppress all above the average tastes and information. It can only be done at the expense of that which is the aim of liberty.

An entire distinct individuality, in the social state, is neither possible nor desirable. Our happiness is so connected with the social and family

ties as to prevent it; but, if it be possible to render ourselves miserable by aspiring to an independence that nature forbids, it is also possible to be made unhappy by a too obtrusive interference with our individuality.

Of all Christian countries, individuality, as connected with habits, is perhaps most encouraged in England; and of all Christian countries this is the one, perhaps, in which there is the least individuality of the same nature. The latter fact would be extraordinary, could it not be referred to the religious discipline that so much

influenced the colonists, and which in a measure supplied the place of law. In communities in which private acts became the subject of public parochial investigation, it followed as a natural consequence, that men lived under the constant corrective of public opinion, however narrow, provincial, or prejudiced. This feature of the American character, therefore, is to be ascribed, in part, to the fanaticism of our ancestors, and, in part, to the natural tendency in democracies to mistake and augment the authority of the publick.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

1794 - 1878

He may not have been a great poet, but he was a great American.

—VERNON LOUIS PARRINGTON, *Main Currents in American Thought* (1927), II, 246.

Bryant, who lived among the Knickerbockers but was not of them, was born on November 3, 1794—eleven years after Irving and five after Cooper. He was twenty-four years younger than Wordsworth, with whom he has often been compared. He was born in Cummington in western Massachusetts and grew up in the midst of some of the finest scenery in the state. When in 1845 Bryant saw the Wordsworth country, remarks his son-in-law and biographer, he “could easily have fancied himself transported from his own Western Massachusetts—the grand out-looks everywhere are so alike.” The poet’s father, Dr. Peter Bryant, was a Federalist, a physician, and a lover of poetry who encouraged his son Cullen to write verse. Among the poet’s relatives there were other doctors and makers of verses. Although both father and son eventually became Unitarians, the poet’s boyhood was much what one would have expected to find among the earlier Puritans. The following passages from Bryant’s fragment of an autobiography throw light upon his boyhood:

“The boys of the generation to which I belonged were brought up under a system of discipline which put a far greater distance between parents and their children than now exists. . . . My grandfather was a disciplinarian of the stricter sort, and I can hardly find words to express the awe in which I stood of him—an awe so great as almost to prevent anything like affection on my part, although he

was in the main kind, and, certainly, never thought of being severe beyond what was necessary to maintain a proper degree of order in the family."

"In a community so religious I naturally acquired habits of devotion. My mother and grandmother had taught me, as soon as I could speak, the Lord's Prayer and other little petitions suited to childhood, and I may be said to have been nurtured on Watts' devout poems composed for children. The prayer of the publican in the New Testament ["God be merciful to me a sinner"] was often in my mouth, and I heard every variety of prayer at the Sunday evening services conducted by laymen in private houses. But I varied in my private devotions from these models, in one respect, namely, in supplicating, as I often did, that I might receive the gift of poetic genius, and write verses that might endure. . . . The Calvinistic system of divinity I adopted, of course, as I heard nothing else taught from the pulpit, and supposed it to be the accepted belief of the religious world."

"As soon as I was able to handle the lighter implements of agriculture I was employed in the summer season in farm work, under the tuition of my grandfather Snell, who taught me to plant and hoe corn and potatoes, to rake hay and reap wheat and oats with the sickle. . . . In raking hay my grandfather put me before him, and, if I did not make speed enough to keep out of his way, the teeth of his rake touched my heels. . . .

"My health was rather delicate from infancy and easily disturbed. Sometimes the tasks of the farm were too great for my strength, and brought on a sick headache. . . .

"So my time passed in study, diversified with labor and recreation. In the long winter evenings and the stormy winter days I read, with my elder brother, books from my father's library—not a large one, but well chosen."

"I was always from my earliest years a delighted observer of external nature—the splendors of a winter daybreak over the wide waste of snow seen from our windows, the glories of the autumnal woods, the gloomy approaches of the thunderstorm, and its departure amid sunshine and rainbows, the return of spring, with its flowers, and the first snowfall of winter. The poets fostered this taste in me, and though at the time I rarely heard such things spoken of, it was none the less cherished in my secret mind."

Cullen began to write verses at the age of eight. When he was thirteen, his father happened to see some lines which the boy had written about Thomas Jefferson, then President of the United States. We quote them here partly as a specimen of Bryant's juvenile verse and partly as an indication of the extreme to which party feeling carried the New England Federalists:

*"And thou [Jefferson], the scorn of every patriot's name,
Thy country's ruin and thy council's shame!
Poor servile thing! derision of the brave!
Who erst from Tarleton fled to Carter's cave;
Thou, who, when menac'd by perfidious Gaul,
Didst prostrate to her whisker'd minion fall;
And when our cash her empty bags supply'd,
Didst meanly strive the foul disgrace to hide;*

*Go, wretch, resign the presidential chair,
Disclose thy secret measures, foul or fair.
Go, search with curious eye for hornèd frogs,
Mid the wild wastes of Lousianian bogs;
Or, where Ohio rolls his turbid stream,
Dig for huge bones, thy glory and thy theme.
Go, scan, Philosphist, thy Sally's charms,
And sink supinely in her sable arms;
But quit to abler hands the helm of state."*

The surprising thing is that the father—far from chastising the young satirist—encouraged him to expand the passage into a long poem. This, *The Embargo*, was published in 1808 in Boston at Dr. Bryant's expense.

The poet had been named for William Cullen, a distinguished Scottish physician; and the family expected him to follow in the father's profession. Cullen, however, had seen too much of the hard life of a country doctor, and the profession did not appeal to him. He was prepared for college by country ministers (the ministry was still the educated class in rural New England), who tutored him in Latin and Greek. The Greek influence upon the future translator of Homer was an important one. He entered Williams College at the age of fifteen, but withdrew before the end of his first year. He had expected to go to Yale the next year, but his father could not afford to send him. He studied law in much the same way as he had studied Greek and Latin. He was admitted to the bar in 1814 and practiced law for about nine years.

Meanwhile he had continued to write verse. His discovery of the late eighteenth-century Romantic poets—Wordsworth was to come later—turned him from Pope, heroic couplets, and satire to nature, melancholy, and blank verse. The Romantic influence, which we have noted in the case of Philip Freneau, affected Bryant more profoundly. The closing paragraph of the autobiographical fragment already mentioned indicates Bryant's reading at the time he wrote the first version of "Thanatopsis":

"About this time [the summer of 1811?] my father brought home, I think from one of his visits to Boston, the 'Remains of Henry Kirke White,' which had been republished in this country. I read the poems with great eagerness, and so often that I had committed several of them to memory, particularly the ode to the Rosemary. The melancholy tone which prevails in them deepened the interest with which I read them, for about that time I had, as young poets are apt to have, a liking for poetry of a querulous cast. I remember reading, at this time, that remarkable poem, Blair's 'Grave,' and dwelling with great pleasure upon its finer passages. I had the opportunity of comparing it with a poem on a kindred subject, that of Bishop Porteus on 'Death,' and of observing how much the verse of the obscure Scottish minister excelled in originality of thought and vigor of expression that of the English prelate. In my father's library I found a small, thin volume of the miscellaneous poems of Southey, to which he had not called my attention, containing some of the finest of Southey's shorter poems. I read it greedily. Cowper's poems had been in my hands from an early age, and I now passed from his shorter poems, which are generally mere rhymed prose, to his 'Task,' the finer passages of which supplied a form of blank verse that captivated my admiration."

The first version of "Thanatopsis," written when Bryant was only seventeen or eighteen, shows the influence of the so-called "Graveyard School" of British poets; the influence of Wordsworth appears in the revised and enlarged version which contains the famous conclusion. It is probable that in writing the earlier version Bryant had particularly in mind Henry Kirke White's poem, "Time." Bryant at that time seems to have thought himself, like White, doomed to an early death from consumption. The earlier version was published in the newly established *North American Review* in September, 1817. The only thing approaching a sensation which it produced occurred among the editors. One of them, Richard Henry Dana, Sr., wrote in 1846:

"Going into town one day while assisting E. T. Channing (now Professor) in the *North American Review* (1817), he read to me a couple of pieces of poetry which had just been sent to the *Review*—the 'Thanatopsis' and 'The Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood.' While C— was reading one of them I broke out, saying, 'That was never written on this side of the water'—and naturally enough, considering what American poetry had been up to that moment."

The editors of the *North American Review* were quick to recognize Bryant's talents, and they did what they could to prevent the young lawyer from deserting literature altogether. They induced him to write prose as well as verse for the *Review*. They got him the honor of reading a Phi Beta Kappa poem at Harvard, and they helped to arrange the publication of his poems in 1821. In that year Bryant married Miss Frances Fairchild, a farmer's daughter, to whom he addressed "Oh Fairest of the Rural Maids."

Before the publication of his *Poems* in 1821, Bryant had discovered Wordsworth. Dana tells the story:

"I never shall forget with what feeling my friend Bryant, some years ago, described to me the effect produced upon him by his meeting for the first time with Wordsworth's ballads. He said that, upon opening the book, a thousand springs seemed to gush up at once in his heart, and the face of Nature, of a sudden, to change into a strange freshness and life."

When in 1845 Bryant met Wordsworth at Rydal Mount, he was not particularly impressed with the English poet. He wrote in his diary at that time:

"Mr. Wordsworth was in the garden, in a white broad-brimmed, low-crowned hat; he received me very kindly; showed me over his grounds, his study, etc. Beautiful view of Windermere from his house, and of Rydal Water from part of his grounds. At six o'clock took tea with him, after having first looked at Stock Ghyll Force. He showed us the fall of the Rothay in Rydal Park, belonging to Lady Fleming. Left his house at ten o'clock in the evening."

Meanwhile Bryant had grown weary of the law. In "Green River" he speaks of himself as

"forced to drudge for the dregs of men,
And scrawl strange words with a barbarous pen,
And mingle among the jostling crowd,
Where the sons of strife are subtle and loud."

He wanted to live in Boston, where he could find more congenial associates; but his father advised against the move—there were, he said, too many lawyers in Boston already. Poetry

NATIONALISM AND ROMANTICISM-----1789-1830

was not likely to provide a means of livelihood, for in five years the *Poems* brought him only \$14.92. In 1825 at the age of thirty-one Bryant finally broke away and settled in New York, where he spent the remainder of his long life. He became one of the editors of the *New York Review and Athenæum Magazine*. The magazine soon died, and for a short time Bryant was forced to turn to the law once more. Soon, however, he established a connection with the *New York Evening Post*, of which he was later editor and part-owner. The connection lasted over half a century, and Bryant became one of the great newspaper editors of the age. Par-
rington is perhaps the only critic who has stressed the importance of Bryant's newspaper work, which the lover of *belles-lettres* is inclined to slight:

"He was a much larger man and more significant than the critics have made him out to be. His active and many-sided life is very inadequately expressed in the slender volume of his verse, excellent as much of that is. The journalist and critic who for fifty years sat in judgment on matters political and economic as well as cultural, who reflected in the *Evening Post* a refinement of taste and dignity of character before unequalled in American journalism, was of service to America quite apart from his contribution to our incipient poetry. He was the father of nineteenth-century American journalism as well as the father of nineteenth-century American poetry."

In New York Bryant—the author of *The Embargo*—became a Democrat and a supporter of Andrew Jackson. The result was a mild sort of social ostracism on the part of the Whigs, who detested Democrats as plebeians and levelers. Says Parke Godwin, "Even the most charitable among them [the better classes in New York] found it difficult to understand how a gentleman of education and refinement, impelled by no craving for office or leadership, could take the side of the unwashed multitude, whose popular name of Locofocos was supposed to indicate their inflammatory character." Becoming a Republican in later years, Bryant was one of the first prominent Easterners to support Lincoln as a leader of the party. When Lincoln made his notable address at Cooper Union in February, 1860, Bryant presided; and Lincoln is said to have remarked that it was worth a journey from the West to the East to see such a man.

Bryant's removal to New York in 1825 seems to divide his life into two periods. He became less provincial, and he took a much wider interest in affairs of all kinds; but while he never ceased to write verse, most of his distinctive verse was written before 1840. "The poet Bryant," remarks Fred Lewis Pattee, "died at length in the city newspaper office." Again and again his old friend Dana wrote to urge him to give more of his time to poetry. Bryant wrote to Dana on October 2, 1833:

"After all, poetic wares are not for the market of the present day. Poetry may get printed in the newspapers, but no man makes money by it, for the simple reason that nobody cares a fig for it. The taste for it is something old-fashioned; the march of the age is in another direction; mankind are occupied with politics, railroads, and steamboats."

Again he wrote in reply to Dana's urging on February 27, 1837:

"I should be glad of an opportunity to attempt something in the way I like best, and am, perhaps, fittest for; but here I am a draught-horse, harnessed to a daily

drag. I have so much to do with my legs and hoofs, struggling and pulling and kicking, that, if there is anything of the Pegasus in me, I am too much exhausted to use my wings."

Bryant's poetic faculty was declining at the time when Poe, Emerson, Longfellow, Holmes, and Whittier were beginning, following Bryant's lead, to give America what is perhaps its finest poetry.

Among his later works are the addresses on Irving and Cooper, his translations of the *Iliad* (1870) and the *Odyssey* (1872), and a few poems—among them "A Life-time" and "The Flood of Years." He died on June 12, 1878.

In *The Literati* Poe gave a description of Bryant's appearance, from which the following sentences are taken:

"In height, he is, perhaps, five feet nine. His frame is rather robust. His features are large but thin. His countenance is sallow, nearly bloodless. His eyes are piercing gray, deep set, with large projecting eyebrows. His mouth is wide and massive, the expression of the smile hard, cold—even sardonic. The forehead is broad, with prominent organs of ideality; a good deal bald; the hair thin and grayish, as are also the whiskers, which he wears in a simple style. His bearing is quite distinguished, full of the aristocracy of intellect . . . accused of harshness, or coldness of heart. Never was there a greater mistake. His soul is charity itself, in all respects generous and noble. His manners are undoubtedly reserved."

Hawthorne, who saw Bryant in Italy in 1858, has left a striking description in his *Italian Note-Books*:

" . . . with a long white beard, such as a palmer might have worn as the growth of his long pilgrimages, a brow almost entirely bald, and what hair he had quite hoary; a forehead impending, yet not massive; dark, bushy eyebrows and keen eyes, without much softness in them; a dark and sallow complexion; a slender figure, bent a little with age, but at once alert and firm. . . . There was a weary look in his face, as if he were tired of seeing things and doing things, though with certainly enough still to see and do, if need were. . . . His manners and whole aspect are very particularly plain, though not affectedly so; but it seems as if in the decline of life, and the security of his position, he had put off whatever artificial polish he may heretofore have had, and resumed the simpler habits and deportment of his early New England breeding. Not but what you discover, nevertheless, that he is a man of refinement, who has seen the world, and is well aware of his own place in it."

" . . . He uttered neither passion nor poetry, but excellent good sense, and accurate information, on whatever subject transpired; a very pleasant man to associate with, but rather cold, I should imagine, if one should seek to touch his heart with one's own. He shook hands kindly all round, but not with any warmth of gripe, although the ease of his deportment had put us all on sociable terms with him."

The two-volume life of Bryant by Parke Godwin, his son-in-law, in the six volumes of *The Life and Works of William Cullen Bryant* (1883-1884), is a good, old-fashioned biography. There are later biographies by John Bigelow (1890) and W. A. Bradley (1905). See

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also Allan Nevins's sketch in *D.A.B.* and his *The Evening Post: A Century of Journalism* (1922), which treats Bryant's editorial work. The best editions of the poems are Parke Godwin's, in *The Life and Works*, and that of H. C. Sturges (1903). Among the various articles on Bryant which Tremaine McDowell has published, see "Bryant and *The North American Review*," *American Literature*, I, 14-26 (March, 1929). See also his *William Cullen Bryant: Representative Selections* (1935), which contains an excellent introductory essay and a good bibliography. See also M. T. Herrick, "Rhetoric and Poetry in Bryant," *American Literature*, VII, 188-194 (May, 1935).

In reading Bryant's poems, bear in mind the following passage from his introduction to *A Library of Poetry and Song*:

"To me it seems that one of the most important requisites for a great poet is a luminous style. The elements of poetry lie in natural objects, in the vicissitudes of human life, in the emotions of the human heart, and the relations of man to man. He who can present them in combinations and lights which at once affect the mind with a deep sense of their truth and beauty is the poet for his own age and the ages that succeed him. . . . The metaphysician, the subtle thinker, the dealer in abstruse speculations, whatever his skill in versification, misapplies it when he abandons the more convenient form of prose, and perplexes himself with the attempt to express his ideas in poetic numbers."

CRITICAL COMMENTS

I join with all my heart to honor this native, sincere, original, partiotic poet. I say original: I have heard him charged with being of a certain school. I heard it with surprise, and asked, What school? for he never reminded me of Goldsmith, or Wordsworth, or Byron, or Moore. I found him always original—a true painter of the face of the country, and of the sentiment of his own people. When I read the verses of popular American and English poets, I often think that they appear to have gone into the art galleries and to have seen pictures of mountains, but this man to have seen mountains. With his stout staff he has climbed Greylock and the White Hills, and sung what he saw. He renders Berkshire to me in verse, with the sober coloring, too, to which nature cleaves, only now and then permitting herself the scarlet and gold of the prism. It is his proper praise that he first, and he only, made known to mankind our northern landscape—its summer splendor, its autumn russet, its winter lights and glooms. And he is original because he is sincere (Address of Ralph Waldo Emerson at the Century Club in New York on Bryant's seventieth birthday in 1864).

Bryant's fatal defect was this omnipresent self-control, this puritanic concealment of the deepest passions of the heart, this careful covering over of our spiritual chasms. He did not have the audacity, the frenzy of the great poet. His themes were homely, his ideas those of his generation. Instead of burning with the spark of nature's fire he warmed his hands by a comfortable hearthside or sat close to the smoky lamp of the scholar¹ (Grant C. Knight, *American Literature and Culture*, 1932, p. 157).

¹ Compare the estimate of Bryant in Lowell's *A Fable for Critics* (see p. 597).

LETTER TO JOSEPH H. RICHARDS*

[1871]

NEW YORK, *March 30th*: . . . I rise early, at this time of the year about half past five; in summer half an hour, or even an hour, earlier. Immediately, with very little encumbrance of clothing, I begin a series of exercises, for the most part designed to expand the chest, and at the same time call into action all the muscles and articulations of the body. These are performed with dumb-bells—the very lightest, covered with flannel—with a pole, a horizontal bar, and a light chair swung round my head. After a full hour, and sometimes more, passed in this manner, I bathe from head to foot. When at my place in the country I sometimes shorten my exercises in the chamber, and, going out, occupy myself in some work which requires brisk motion. After my bath, if breakfast be not ready, I sit down to my studies till I am called.

My breakfast is a simple one—hominy and milk, or, in place of hominy, brown bread, or oatmeal, or wheaten grits, and, in the season, baked sweet apples. Buckwheat cakes I do not decline, nor any other article of vegetable food, but animal food I never take at breakfast. Tea and coffee I never touch at any time; sometimes I take a cup of chocolate, which has no narcotic effect, and agrees with me very well. At breakfast I often take fruit, either in its natural state or freshly stewed.

After breakfast I occupy myself for a while with my studies; and when in town I walk down to the office of the "Evening Post," nearly three miles distant, and after about three hours return, always walking, whatever be the weather or the state of the streets. In the country I am engaged in my literary tasks till a feeling of weariness drives me out into the open air, and I go upon my farm or into the garden, and prune the fruit-trees or perform some other work about them which they need, and then go back to my books. I do not often drive out, preferring to walk.

In the country I dine early, and it is only at that meal that I take either meat or fish, and of these but a moderate quantity, making my dinner mostly of vegetables. At the meal which is called tea I take only a little bread and butter,

with fruit, if it be on the table. In town, where I dine later, I make but two meals a day. Fruit makes a considerable part of my diet, and I eat at almost any hour of the day without inconvenience. My drink is water, yet I sometimes, though rarely, take a glass of wine. I am a natural temperance man, finding myself rather confused than exhilarated by wine. I never meddle with tobacco, except to quarrel with its use.

That I may rise early, I, of course, go to bed early; in town as early as ten; in the country somewhat earlier. For many years I have avoided in the evening every kind of literary occupation which tasks the faculties, such as composition, even to the writing of letters, for the reason that it excites the nervous system and prevents sound sleep. . . . I abominate drugs and narcotics, and have always carefully avoided anything which spurs nature to exertions which it would not otherwise make. Even with my food I do not take the usual condiments, such as pepper and the like.

THANATOPSIS

(1811? 1821; 1817, 1821)

The earlier version of "Thanatopsis" was published in the *North American Review* for September, 1817; the revised and enlarged version appeared in the *Poems* (1821). The title, which means a view of death (Θάνατος ὄψις), was given the poem by the editors of the *Review*. See Carl Van Doren, "The Growth of 'Thanatopsis,'" *The Nation*, CI, 432 (October 7, 1915). Do the lines of the first version seem altogether fitting in the mouth of Nature, who is the spokesman in the later version? The philosophy of the poem is Stoic. Compare the following sentences from the *Meditations* of the Roman Emperor, Marcus Aurelius:

"Act, speak, and think as one who knows that he can at any moment depart from life. . . .

"What, then, can be our guide? Philosophy alone. And this consists in keeping the divinity within us inviolate; superior to pleasures and pains; free from inconsiderateness in action, and insincerity and hypocrisy; independent of what others may do or leave undone; accepting cheerfully whatever befalls or is appointed, as coming from the same source as himself; and, above all, awaiting death with a serene mind, as the natural dissolution of the elements of which every animal is compounded.

"And if for the elements there is nothing terrible in the continual change from one form to another, why should one dread the transformation and dis-

* Reprinted from Parke Godwin's *Life and Works of William Cullen Bryant*, by permission of the publishers, D. Appleton-Century Company, etc.

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solution of the whole? It is natural, and nothing natural can be evil."

The four rhymed stanzas below were not intended by Bryant as a part of "Thanatopsis."

The 1817 Version

Not that from life, and all its woes
The hand of death shall set me free;
Not that this head, shall then repose
In the low vale most peacefully.

Ah, when I touch time's farthest brink,
A kinder solace must attend;
It chills my very soul, to think
On that dread hour when life must end.

In vain the flatt'ring verse may breathe,
Of ease from pain, and rest from strife,
There is a sacred dread of death
Inwoven with the strings of life.

This bitter cup at first was given
When angry *justice* frown'd severe,
And 'tis th' eternal doom of heaven
That man must view the grave with fear.

----- Yet a few days, and thee,
The all-beholding sun, shall see no more,
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears,
Nor in th' embrace of ocean shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall
claim

Thy growth, to be resolv'd to earth again;
And, lost each human trace, surrend'ring up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix forever with the elements,
To be a brother to th' insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy
mould.

Yet not to thy eternal resting place
Shalt thou retire alone--nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world--with kings
The powerful of the earth--the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre.--The hills,
Rock-ribb'd and ancient as the sun,--the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between;

The venerable woods--the floods that move
In majesty,--and the complaining brooks,
That wind among the meads, and make them
green,

5 Are but the seldom decorations all,
Of the great tomb of man --The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven
Are glowing on the sad abodes of death,
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
10 The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.--Take the wings
Of morning--and the Borean desert pierce--
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
That veil Oregon, where he hears no sound
15 Save his own dashings--yet--the dead are there,
And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep--the dead reign there alone.--
So shalt thou rest--and what if thou shalt fall
20 Unnoticed by the living--and no friend
Take note of thy departure? Thousands more
Will share thy destiny.--The tittering world
Dance to the grave. The busy brood of care
Plod on, and each one chases as before
25 His favourite phantom.--Yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall
come
And make their bed with thee!-----

30 The 1821 Version

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language; for his gayer hours
35 She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness, ere he is aware. When thoughts
40 Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
Over thy spirit, and sad images
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,
Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart; --
45 Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To Nature's teachings, while from all around--
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air--
Comes a still voice.--Yet a few days, and thee
The all-beholding sun shall see no more
50 In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears,
Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist

Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall
claim

Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix forever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon The oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy
mould.

Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,
The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,—the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods—rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, poured
round all,
Old Ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.—Take the wings
Of morning, pierce the Barcan wilderness,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,
Save his own dashings—yet the dead are there:
And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep—the dead reign there alone.
So shalt thou rest, and what if thou withdraw
In silence from the living, and no friend
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care
Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favorite phantom; yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall
come
And make their bed with thee. As the long train
Of ages glide away, the sons of men,
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes

In the full strength of years, matron and maid,
The speechless babe, and the gray-headed man—
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,
By those, who in their turn shall follow them.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and
soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

INSCRIPTION FOR THE ENTRANCE TO A WOOD

(1815, 1817)

Under the title, "A Fragment," this poem was
printed in the same number of the *North American
Review* as "Thanatopsis." The closing sentence was
added in the first edition of Bryant's *Poems* (1821).
Parke Godwin, Bryant's son-in-law and biographer,
writes of this poem:

"Composed in a noble old forest that fronted his
father's dwelling-house, it is an exquisite picture of
the calm contentment he found in the woods. Every
object—the green leaves, the thick roof, the mossy
rocks, the cleft-born wind-flowers, the dancing in-
sects, the squirrel with raised paws, the ponderous
trunks, black roots, and sunken brooks—is painted
with the minutest fidelity, and yet with an almost
impassioned sympathy."

The poem reminds one of two groups of Words-
worth's poems (which Bryant had not yet read):
"Poems on the Naming of Places" and "Inscriptions."

Stranger, if thou hast learned a truth which
needs
No school of long experience, that the world
Is full of guilt and misery, and hast seen
Enough of all its sorrows, crimes, and cares,
To tire thee of it, enter this wild wood
And view the haunts of Nature. The calm shade
Shall bring a kindred calm, and the sweet breeze
That makes the green leaves dance, shall waft a
balm
To thy sick heart. Thou wilt find nothing here
Of all that pained thee in the haunts of men,

And made thee loathe thy life. The primal curse
Fell, it is true, upon the unsinning earth,
But not in vengeance. God hath yoked to guilt
Her pale tormentor, misery. Hence, these shades
Are still the abodes of gladness; the thick roof
Of green and stirring branches is alive
And musical with birds, that sing and sport
In wantonness of spirit; while below
The squirrel, with raised paws and form erect,
Chirps merrily. Throngs of insects in the shade
Try their thin wings and dance in the warm beam
That waked them into life. Even the green trees
Partake the deep contentment; as they bend
To the soft winds, the sun from the blue sky
Looks in and sheds a blessing on the scene.
Scarce less the cleft-born wild-flower seems to
enjoy

Existence, than the winged plunderer
That sucks its sweets. The mossy rocks themselves,
And the old and ponderous trunks of prostrate
trees

That lead from knoll to knoll a causey rude
Or bridge the sunken brook, and their dark roots,
With all their earth upon them, twisting high,
Breathe fixed tranquillity. The rivulet
Sends forth glad sounds, and tripping o'er its
bed

Of pebbly sands, or leaping down the rocks,
Seems, with continuous laughter, to rejoice
In its own being. Softly tread the marge,
Lest from her midway perch thou scare the wren
That dips her bill in water. The cool wind,
That stirs the stream in play, shall come to thee,
Like one that loves thee nor will let thee pass
Ungreeted, and shall give its light embrace.

TO A WATERFOWL

(1815; 1818)

This poem was written on December 15, 1815, at Plainfield, Mass. Bryant had gone there to make inquiries about beginning the practice of law there. To quote from Parke Godwin's biography:

"He felt, as he walked up the hills, very forlorn and desolate indeed, not knowing what was to become of him in the big world. . . . The sun had already set, leaving behind it one of those brilliant seas of chrysolite and opal which often flood the New England skies; and while he was looking upon the rosy splendor with rapt admiration, a solitary bird made wing along the illuminated horizon. He watched the lone wanderer until it was lost in the distance, ask-

ing himself whither it had come and to what far home it was flying. When he went to the house where he was to stop for the night, his mind was still full of what he had seen and felt, and he wrote . . . 'The Waterfowl.'"

5

In his life of Bryant, John Bigelow quotes a portion of a letter from Parke Godwin:

"Once when the late Matthew Arnold, with his family, was visiting the ever-hospitable country home of Mr. Charles Butler, I happened to spend an evening there. In the course of it Mr. Arnold took up a volume of Mr. Bryant's poems from the table, and turning to me said, 'This is *the* American poet, *facile princeps*,' and after a pause he continued. 'When I first heard of him, Hartley Coleridge (I was but a lad at the time) came into my father's house one afternoon considerably excited and exclaimed, "Matt, do you want to hear the best short poem in the English language?" "Faith, Hartley, I do," was my reply. He then read a poem "To a Waterfowl" in his best manner. And he was a good reader. As soon as he had done he asked, "What do you think of that?" "I am not sure but you are right, Hartley; is that your father's?" was my reply. "No," he rejoined, "father has written nothing like that." Some days after he might be heard muttering to himself,

"*'The desert and illimitable air,
Lone wandering, but not lost.'*"

Whither, midst falling dew,
30 While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
35 Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly seen against the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
40 Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean-side?

There is a Power whose care
45 Teaches thy way along that pathless coast—
The desert and illimitable air—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
50 At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;
 Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
 And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend,
 Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
 Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my heart
 Deeply has sunk the lesson thou hast given,
 And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
 Guides through the boundless sky thy certain
 flight,
 In the long way that I must tread alone,
 Will lead my steps aright.

"OH FAIREST OF THE RURAL MAIDS"

(1820)

This poem, one of the few love poems that Bryant published, was addressed to a farmer's daughter, Miss Frances Fairchild, whom he married in 1821. Compare the poem with Wordsworth's "Three Years She Grew," which is given below.

*Three years she grew in sun and shower,
 Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
 On earth was never sown;
 This child I to myself will take,
 She shall be mine, and I will make
 A lady of my own.*

*"Myself will to my darling be
 Both law and impulse: and with me
 The girl, in rock and plain,
 In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
 Shall feel an overseeing power
 To kindle or restrain.*

*"She shall be sportive as the fawn
 That wild with glee across the lawn
 Or up the mountain springs;
 And hers shall be the breathing balm,
 And hers the silence and the calm
 Of mute insensate things*

*"The floating clouds their state shall lend
 To her; for her the willow bend;
 Nor shall she fail to see
 Even in the motions of the storm
 Grace that shall mould the maiden's form
 By silent sympathy.*

*"The stars of midnight shall be dear
 To her; and she shall lean her ear*

*In many a secret place
 Where violets dance their wayward round,
 And beauty born of murmuring sound
 Shall pass into her face.*

5 "And vital feelings of delight
 Shall rear her form to stately height,
 Her virgin bosom swell,
 Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
 While she and I together live
 Here in this happy dell."

10 Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
 How soon my Lucy's race was run!
 She died, and left to me
 15 This heath, this calm, and quiet scene;
 The memory of what has been,
 And never more will be

Oh fairest of the rural maids!

Thy birth was in the forest shades;
 20 Green boughs, and glimpses of the sky,
 Were all that met thine infant eye.

Thy sports, thy wanderings, when a child,
 Were ever in the sylvan wild,
 25 And all the beauty of the place
 Is in thy heart and on thy face.

The twilight of the trees and rocks
 Is in the light shade of thy locks;
 30 Thy step is as the wind, that weaves
 Its playful way among the leaves.

Thine eyes are springs,¹ in whose serene
 And silent waters heaven is seen;
 35 Their lashes are the herbs that look
 On their young figures in the brook.

The forest depths, by foot unpressed,
 Are not more sinless than thy breast;
 40 The holy peace, that fills the air
 Of those calm solitudes, is there.

A FOREST HYMN

(1825; 1825)

45 This is the last poem Bryant wrote at Great Bar-
 rington before his removal to New York.

The groves were God's first temples. Ere man
 learned
 To hew the shaft, and lay the architrave,
 50 And spread the roof above them—ere he framed

¹ In "My Springs," Sidney Lanier has developed
 this figure in considerable detail.

The lofty vault, to gather and roll back
 The sound of anthems; in the darkling wood,
 Amid the cool and silence, he knelt down,
 And offered to the Mightiest solemn thanks
 And supplication. For his simple heart
 Might not resist the sacred influences
 Which, from the stilly twilight of the place,
 And from the gray old trunks that high in heaven
 Mingled their mossy boughs, and from the sound
 Of the invisible breath that swayed at once
 All their green tops, stole over him, and bowed
 His spirit with the thought of boundless power
 And inaccessible majesty. Ah, why
 Should we, in the world's riper years, neglect
 God's ancient sanctuaries, and adore
 Only among the crowd, and under roofs
 That our frail hands have raised? Let me at least,
 Here, in the shadow of this aged wood,
 Offer one hymn—thrice happy, if it find
 Acceptance in His ear.

Father, thy hand

Hath reared these venerable columns, thou
 Didst weave this verdant roof. Thou didst look
 down
 Upon the naked earth, and, forthwith, rose
 All these fair ranks of trees. They, in thy sun,
 Budded, and shook their green leaves in thy
 breeze,
 And shot toward heaven. The century-living
 crow,
 Whose birth was in their tops, grew old and died
 Among their branches, till, at last, they stood,
 As now they stand, massy, and tall, and dark,
 Fit shrine for humble worshipper to hold
 Communion with his Maker. These dim vaults,
 These winding aisles, of human pomp or pride
 Report not. No fantastic carvings show
 The boast of our vain race to change the form
 Of thy fair works. But thou art here—thou fill'st
 The solitude. Thou art in the soft winds
 That run along the summit of these trees
 In music; thou art in the cooler breath
 That from the inmost darkness of the place
 Comes, scarcely felt; the barky trunks, the
 ground,
 The fresh moist ground, are all instinct with
 thee.

Here is continual worship;—Nature, here,
 In the tranquillity that thou dost love,
 Enjoys thy presence. Noiselessly, around,
 From perch to perch, the solitary bird
 Passes; and yon clear spring, that, midst its herbs,
 Wells softly forth and wandering steepes the roots

Of half the mighty forest, tells no tale
 Of all the good it does. Thou has not left
 Thyself without a witness, in the shades,
 Of thy perfections. Grandeur, strength, and
 grace

Are here to speak of thee. This mighty oak—
 By whose immovable stem I stand and seem
 Almost annihilated—not a prince,
 In all that proud old world beyond the deep,
 E'er wore his crown as loftily as he
 Wears the green coronal of leaves with which
 Thy hand has graced him. Nestled at his root
 Is beauty, such as blooms not in the glare
 Of the broad sun. That delicate forest flower,
 With scented breath and look so like a smile,
 Seems, as it issues from the shapeless mould,
 An emanation of the indwelling Life,
 A visible token of the upholding Love,
 That are the soul of this great universe.

My heart is awed within me when I think
 Of the great miracle that still goes on,
 In silence, round me—the perpetual work
 Of thy creation, finished, yet renewed
 Forever. Written on thy works I read
 The lesson of thy own eternity.
 Lo! all grow old and die—but see again,
 How on the faltering footsteps of decay
 Youth presses—ever-gay and beautiful youth
 In all its beautiful forms. These lofty trees
 Wave not less proudly that their ancestors
 Moulder beneath them. Oh, there is not lost
 One of earth's charms: upon her bosom yet,
 After the flight of untold centuries,
 The freshness of her far beginning lies
 And yet shall lie. Life mocks the idle hate
 Of his arch-enemy Death—yea, seats himself
 Upon the tyrant's throne—the sepulchre,
 And of the triumphs of his ghastly foe
 Makes his own nourishment. For he came forth
 From thine own bosom, and shall have no
 end.

There have been holy men who hid themselves
 Deep in the woody wilderness, and gave
 Their lives to thought and prayer, till they
 outlived

The generation born with them, nor seemed
 Less aged than the hoary trees and rocks
 Around them;—and there have been holy men
 Who deemed it were not well to pass life thus.
 But let me often to these solitudes
 Retire, and in thy presence reassure

My feeble virtue. Here its enemies,
 Thy passions, at thy plainer footsteps shrink
 And tremble and are still. O God! when thou
 Dost scare the world with tempests, set on fire
 The heavens with falling thunderbolts, or fill,
 With all the waters of the firmament,
 The swift dark whirlwind that uproots the woods
 And drowns the villages; when, at thy call,
 Uprises the great deep and throws himself
 Upon the continent, and overwhelms
 Its cities—who forgets not, at the sight
 Of these tremendous tokens of thy power,
 His pride, and lays his strifes and follies by?
 Oh, from these sterner aspects of thy face
 Spare me and mine, nor let us need the wrath
 Of the mad unchained elements to teach
 Who rules them. Be it ours to meditate,
 In these calm shades, thy milder majesty,
 And to the beautiful order of thy works
 Learn to conform the order of our lives.

JUNE

(1825; 1826)

Poe, who quoted a portion of "June" in his lecture, "The Poetic Principle," made the following comment, which throws perhaps more light on Poe's conception of poetry than upon Bryant's:

"Among the minor poems of Bryant, none has so much impressed me as the one which he entitles 'June.' . . . The rhythmical flow, here, is even voluptuous—nothing could be more melodious. The poem has always affected me in a remarkable manner. The intense melancholy which seems to well up, perforce, to the surface of all the poet's cheerful sayings about his grave, we find thrilling us to the soul—while there is the truest poetic elevation in the thrill. The impression left is one of a pleasurable sadness. And if, in the remaining compositions which I shall introduce to you, there be more or less of a similar tone always apparent, let me remind you that (how or why we know not) this certain taint of sadness is inseparably connected with all the higher manifestations of true Beauty."

I gazed upon the glorious sky
 And the green mountains round,
 And thought that when I came to lie
 At rest within the ground,
 'Twere pleasant, that in flowery June,
 When brooks send up a cheerful tune,
 And groves a joyous sound,

The sexton's hand, my grave to make,
 The rich, green mountain-turf should break.¹

A cell within the frozen mould,
 5 A coffin borne through sleet,
 And icy clods above it rolled,
 While fierce the tempests beat—
 Away!—I will not think of these—
 Blue be the sky and soft the breeze,
 10 Earth green beneath the feet,
 And be the damp mould gently pressed
 Into my narrow place of rest.

There through the long, long summer hours,
 The golden light should lie,
 And thick young herbs and groups of flowers
 Stand in their beauty by.
 The oriole should build and tell
 His love-tale close beside my cell;
 20 The idle butterfly
 Should rest him there, and there be heard
 The housewife bee and humming-bird.

And what if cheerful shouts at noon
 25 Come, from the village sent,
 Or song of maids, beneath the moon
 With fairy laughter blent?
 And what if, in the evening light,
 Betrothed lovers walk in sight
 30 Of my low monument?
 I would the lovely scene around
 Might know no sadder sight nor sound.

I know that I no more should see
 35 The season's glorious show,
 Nor would its brightness shine for me,
 Nor its wild music flow;
 But if, around my place of sleep,
 The friends I love should come to weep,
 40 They might not haste to go.
 Soft airs, and song, and light, and bloom
 Should keep them lingering by my tomb.

These to their softened hearts should bear
 45 The thought of what has been,
 And speak of one who cannot share
 The gladness of the scene;
 Whose part, in all the pomp that fills
 The circuit of the summer hills,
 50 Is that his grave is green;
 And deeply would their hearts rejoice
 To hear again his living voice.

¹ Bryant died in June, 1878.

THE EVENING WIND

(1829)

Spirit that breathest through my lattice, thou
 That cool'st the twilight of the sultry day,
 Gratefully flows thy freshness round my brow;
 Thou hast been out upon the deep at play,
 Riding all day the wild blue waves till now,
 Roughening their crests, and scattering high
 their spray,
 And swelling the white sail. I welcome thee
 To the scorched land, thou wanderer of the sea
 10
 Nor I alone; a thousand bosoms round
 Inhale thee in the fulness of delight;
 And languid forms rise up, and pulses bound
 Livelier, at coming of the wind of night;
 And, languishing to hear thy grateful sound, 15
 Lies the vast inland stretched beyond the sight.
 Go forth into the gathering shade; go forth,
 God's blessing breathed upon the fainting earth!
 Go, rock the little wood-bird in his nest, 20
 Curl the still waters, bright with stars, and
 rouse
 The wide old wood from his majestic rest,
 Summoning from the innumerable boughs
 The strange, deep harmonies that haunt his 25
 breast:
 Pleasant shall be thy way where meekly bows
 The shutting flower, and darkling waters pass,
 And where the o'ershadowing branches sweep
 the grass.
 The faint old man shall lean his silver head
 To feel thee; thou shalt kiss the child asleep,
 And dry the moistened curls that overspread
 His temples, while his breathing grows more 35
 deep;
 And they who stand about the sick man's bed,
 Shall joy to listen to thy distant sweep,
 And softly part his curtains to allow
 Thy visit, grateful to his burning brow. 40
 Go—but the circle of eternal change,
 Which is the life of Nature, shall restore,
 With sounds and scents from all thy mighty
 range,
 Thee to thy birthplace of the deep once more;
 Sweet odors in the sea-air, sweet and strange, 45
 Shall tell the home-sick mariner of the shore;
 And, listening to thy murmur, he shall deem
 He hears the rustling leaf and running stream. 50

HYMN OF THE CITY

(1830)

Not in the solitude
 Alone may man commune with Heaven, or see,
 Only in savage wood
 And sunny vale, the present Deity;
 5 Or only hear his voice
 Where the winds whisper and the waves rejoice.
 Even here do I behold
 Thy steps, Almighty!—here, amid the crowd
 10 Through the great city rolled,
 With everlasting murmur deep and loud—
 Choking the ways that wind
 'Mong the proud piles, the work of human
 kind.
 15 Thy golden sunshine comes
 From the round heaven, and on their dwelling
 lies
 And lights their inner homes;
 20 For them Thou fill'st with air the unbounded
 skies,
 And givest them the stores
 Of ocean, and the harvests of its shores.
 25 Thy Spirit is around,
 Quickening the restless mass that sweeps along;
 And this eternal sound—
 Voices and footfalls of the numberless throng—
 Like the resounding sea,
 30 Or like the rainy tempest, speaks of Thee.
 And when the hour of rest
 Comes, like a calm upon the mid-sea brine,
 Hushing its billowy breast—
 35 The quiet of that moment too is thine;
 It breathes of Him who keeps
 The vast and helpless city while it sleeps.

THE PRAIRIES

(1832; 1833)

In 1832 Bryant visited his brothers in Illinois,
 where he may perhaps have seen Abraham Lincoln,
 at that time a militia captain in the Black Hawk
 War. The two prose passages given below are from
 his letters, the first to Richard Henry Dana, Sr., the
 second to his wife:
 "I have seen the great West, where I ate corn bread
 and hominy, slept in log houses, with twenty men,

women, and children in the same room. . . . At Jacksonville, where my two brothers live, I got on a horse, and travelled about a hundred miles to the northward over the immense prairies, with scattered settlements, on the edges of the groves. These prairies, of a soft, fertile garden soil, and a smooth, undulating surface, on which you may put a horse to full speed, covered with high, thinly growing grass, full of weeds and gaudy flowers, and destitute of bushes or trees, perpetually brought to my mind the idea of their having been once cultivated. They looked to me like the fields of a race which had passed away, whose enclosures and habitations had decayed, but on whose vast and rich plains, smoothed and levelled by tillage, the forest had not yet encroached."

"I believe this to be the most salubrious, and I am sure it is the most fertile, country I ever saw; at the same time I do not think it beautiful. Some of the views, however, from the highest parts of the prairies are what, I have no doubt, some would call beautiful in the highest degree, the green heights and hollows and plains blend so softly and gently with one another."

With Bryant's reaction to the prairie landscape, compare that of Robert Louis Stevenson in *Across the Plains* (1892), a part of which is given in the Appendix to Vol. II of this collection.

These are the gardens of the Desert, these
The unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful,
For which the speech of England has no name—
The Prairies. I behold them for the first
And my heart swells, while the dilated sight
Takes in the encircling vastness. Lo! they stretch,
In airy undulations, far away,
As if the Ocean, in his gentlest swell,
Stood still, with all his rounded billows fixed,
And motionless forever.—Motionless?—
No—they are all unchained again. The clouds
Sweep over with their shadows, and, beneath,
The surface rolls and fluctuates to the eye;
Dark hollows seem to glide along and chase
The sunny ridges. Breezes of the South!
Who toss the golden and the flame-like flowers,
And pass the prairie-hawk that, poised on high,
Flaps his broad wings, yet moves not—ye have
played

Among the palms of Mexico and vines
Of Texas, and have crisped the limpid brooks
That from the fountains of Sonora glide
Into the calm Pacific—have ye fanned
A nobler or a lovelier scene than this?
Man hath no part in all this glorious work:

The hand that built the firmament hath heaved
And smoothed these verdant swells, and sown
their slopes

With herbage, planted them with island groves,
5 And hedged them round with forests. Fitting
floor

For this magnificent temple of the sky—
With flowers whose glory and whose multitude
Rival the constellations! The great heavens
10 Seem to stoop down upon the scene in love,—
A nearer vault, and of a tenderer blue,
Than that which bends above our Eastern hills.

As o'er the verdant waste I guide my steed,
15 Among the high rank grass that sweeps his sides
The hollow beating of his footstep seems
A sacrilegious sound. I think of those
Upon whose rest he tramples. Are they here—
The dead of other days?—and did the dust
20 Of these fair solitudes once stir with life
And burn with passion? Let the mighty mounds
That overlook the rivers, or that rise
In the dim forest crowded with old oaks,
Answer. A race, that long has passed away,
25 Built them;—a disciplined and populous race
Heaped, with long toil, the earth, while yet the
Greek

Was hewing the Pentelicus to forms
Of symmetry, and rearing on its rock
30 The glittering Parthenon. These ample fields
Nourished their harvests, here their herds were
fed,

When haply by their stalls the bison lowed,
And bowed his maned shoulder to the yoke.
35 All day this desert murmured with their toils,
Till twilight blushed, and lovers walked, and
wooed

In a forgotten language, and old tunes,
From instruments of unremembered form,
40 Gave the soft winds a voice. The red-man came—
The roaming hunter-tribes, warlike and fierce,
And the mound-builders vanished from the
earth.

The solitude of centuries untold
Has settled where they dwelt. The prairie-wolf
Hunts in their meadows, and his fresh-dug den
Yawns by my path. The gopher mines the ground
Where stood their swarming cities. All is gone;
All—save the piles of earth that hold their bones,
50 The platforms where they worshipped unknown
gods,

The barriers which they builded from the soil

To keep the foe at bay—till o'er the walls
 The wild beleaguers broke, and, one by one,
 The strongholds of the plain were forced, and
 heaped
 With corpses The brown vultures of the wood 5
 Flocked to those vast uncovered sepulchres,
 And sat, unscared and silent, at their feast.
 Haply some solitary fugitive,
 Lurking in marsh and forest, till the sense
 Of desolation and of fear became 10
 Bitterer than death, yielded himself to die.
 Man's better nature triumphed then. Kind words
 Welcomed and soothed him; the rude conquerors
 Seated the captive with their chiefs; he chose
 A bride among their maidens, and at length 15
 Seemed to forget—yet ne'er forgot—the wife
 Of his first love, and her sweet little ones,
 Butchered, amid their shrieks, with all his race.

Thus change the forms of being. Thus arise 20
 Races of living things, glorious in strength,
 And perish, as the quickening breath of God
 Fills them, or is withdrawn. The red-man, too,
 Has left the blooming wilds he ranged so long,
 And nearer to the Rocky Mountains, sought 25
 A wilder hunting-ground. The beaver builds
 No longer by these streams, but far away,
 On waters whose blue surface ne'er gave back
 The white man's face—among Missouri's springs,
 And pools whose issues swell the Oregon— 30
 He rears his little Venice. In these plains
 The bison feeds no more. Twice twenty leagues
 Beyond remotest smoke of hunter's camp,
 Roams the majestic brute, in herds that shake
 The earth with thundering steps—yet here I meet 35
 His ancient footprints stamped beside the pool.

Still this great solitude is quick with life.
 Myriads of insects, gaudy as the flowers
 They flutter over, gentle quadrupeds, 40
 And birds, that scarce have learned the fear of
 man,
 Are here, and sliding reptiles of the ground,
 Startlingly beautiful. The graceful deer
 Bounds to the wood at my approach. The bee, 45
 A more adventurous colonist than man,
 With whom he came across the eastern deep,
 Fills the savannas with his murmurings,
 And hides his sweets, as in the golden age,
 Within the hollow oak. I listen long
 To his domestic hum, and think I hear
 The sound of that advancing multitude

Which soon shall fill these deserts. From the
 ground
 Comes up the laugh of children, the soft voice
 Of maidens, and the sweet and solemn hymn
 Of Sabbath worshippers The low of herds
 Blends with the rustling of the heavy grain
 Over the dark brown furrows. All at once
 A fresher wind sweeps by, and breaks my dream,
 And I am in the wilderness alone.

THE BATTLE-FIELD

(1837)

This poem may be compared with Emerson's
 "Concord Hymn," which was written in the same
 year In his life of Bryant, Parke Godwin tells the
 following incident.

"The stanza in this poem, beginning, 'Truth crushed
 to earth will [*sic*] rise again,' which everybody
 knows from the frequency with which it has been
 repeated, was first quoted by the late Benjamin F.
 Butler, Attorney-General under Jackson and Van
 Buren, in a speech in Tammany Hall. As he closed,
 a voice of unmistakable brogue shouted out, 'Hur-
 rah for Shakespeare!' 'No,' responded Mr. Butler,
 'not Shakespeare, but a pupil of his in the school of
 Nature and truth—our own Bryant,' when the build-
 ing rang with cheer on cheer."

Once this soft turf, this rivulet's sands,
 Were trampled by a hurrying crowd,
 And fiery hearts and armed hands
 Encountered in the battle-cloud.
 Ah! never shall the land forget
 How gushed the life-blood of her brave—
 Gushed, warm a with hope and courage yet,
 Upon the soil they fought to save.

Now all is calm, and fresh, and still;
 Alone the chirp of flitting bird,
 And talk of children on the hill,
 And bell of wandering kine, are heard.

No solemn host goes trailing by
 The black-mouthed gun and staggering wain;
 Men start not at the battle-cry,
 Oh, be it never heard again!

Soon rested those who fought; but thou
 Who minglest in the harder strife 50
 For truths which men receive not now,
 Thy warfare only ends with life.

A friendless warfare! lingering long
Through weary day and weary year,
A wild and many-weaponed throng
Hang on thy front, and flank, and rear.

Yet nerve thy spirit to the proof,
And blench not at thy chosen lot.
The timid good may stand aloof,
The sage may frown—yet faint thou not.

Nor heed the shaft too surely cast,
The foul and hissing bolt of scorn;
For with thy side shall dwell, at last,
The victory of endurance born.

Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again;
Th' eternal years of God are hers;
But Errors, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies among his worshippers.

Yea, though thou lie upon the dust,
When they who helped thee flee in fear,
Die full of hope and manly trust,
Like those who fell in battle here.

Another hand thy sword shall wield,
Another hand the standard wave,
Till from the trumpet's mouth is pealed
The blast of triumph o'er thy grave.

THE ANTIQUITY OF FREEDOM

(1842)

Here are old trees, tall oaks, and gnarlèd pines,
That stream with gray-green mosses; here the
ground
Was never trenched by spade, and flowers spring
up
Unsown, and die ungathered. It is sweet
To linger here, among the flitting birds
And leaping squirrels, wandering brooks, and
winds
That shake the leaves, and scatter, as they pass,
A fragrance from the cedars, thickly set
With pale-blue berries. In these peaceful shades—
Peaceful, unpruned, immeasurably old—
My thoughts go up the long dim path of years,
Back to the earliest days of liberty.

O FREEDOM! thou art not, as poets dream,
A fair young girl, with light and delicate limbs,

And wavy tresses gushing from the cap
With which the Roman master crowned his slave
When he took off the gyves. A bearded man,
Armed to the teeth, art thou; one mailèd hand
5 Grasps the broad shield, and one the sword; thy
brow,
Glorious in beauty though it be, is scarred
With tokens of old wars, thy massive limbs
Are strong with struggling. Power at thee has
10 launched
His bolts, and with his lightnings smitten thee;
They could not quench the life thou hast from
heaven;
Merciless Power has dug thy dungeon deep,
15 And his swart armorers, by a thousand fires,
Have forged thy chain; yet, while he deems thee
bound,
The links are shivered, and the prison-walls
Fall outward; terribly thou springest forth,
20 As springs the flame above a burning pile,
And shoutest to the nations, who return
Thy shoutings, while the pale oppressor flies.

Thy birthright was not given by human hands:
25 Thou wert twin-born with man. In pleasant
fields,
While yet our race was few, thou sat'st with him,
To tend the quiet flock and watch the stars,
And teach the reed to utter simple airs.
30 Thou by his side, amid the tangled wood,
Didst war upon the panther and the wolf,
His only foes; and thou with him didst draw
The earliest furrow on the mountain-side,
Soft with the deluge. Tyranny himself,
35 Thy enemy, although of reverend look,
Hoary with many years, and far obeyed,
Is later born than thou; and as he meets
The grave defiance of thine elder eye,
The usurper trembles in his fastnesses.

Thou shalt wax stronger with the lapse of
years,
But he shall fade into a feeblèr age—
Feebler, yet subtler. He shall weave his snares,
45 And spring them on thy careless steps, and clap
His withered hands, and from their ambush call
His hordes to fall upon thee. He shall send
Quaint maskers, wearing fair and gallant forms
To catch thy gaze, and uttering graceful words
40 To charm thy ear; while his sly imps, by stealth,
Twine round thee threads of steel, light thread
on thread,

That grow to fetters; or bind down thy arms
 With chains concealed in chaplets. Oh! not yet
 Mayst thou unbrace thy corslet, nor lay by
 Thy sword; nor yet, O Freedom! close thy lids
 In slumber; for thine enemy never sleeps,
 And thou must watch and combat till the day
 Of the new earth and heaven. But wouldst thou
 rest
 Awhile from tumult and the frauds of men,
 These old and friendly solitudes invite
 Thy visit. They, while yet the forest-trees
 Were young upon the unviolated earth,
 And yet the moss-stains on the rock were new,
 Beheld thy glorious childhood, and rejoiced.

THE POET

(1863)

Thou who wouldst wear the name
 Of poet mid thy brethren of mankind,
 And clothe in words of flame
 Thoughts that shall live within the general
 mind!
 Deem not the framing of a deathless lay
 The pastime of a drowsy summer day.

But gather all thy powers,
 And wreak them on the verse that thou dost
 weave,
 And in thy lonely hours,
 At silent morning or at wakeful eve,
 While the warm current tingles through thy
 veins,
 Set forth the burning words in fluent strains.

No smooth array of phrase,
 Artfully sought and ordered though it be,
 Which the cold rhymer lays
 Upon his page with languid industry,
 Can wake the listless pulse to livelier speed,
 Or fill with sudden tears the eyes that read.

The secret wouldst thou know
 To touch the heart or fire the blood at will?
 Let thine own eyes o'erflow;
 Let thy lips quiver with the passionate thrill;
 Seize the great thought, ere yet its power be past,
 And bind, in words, the fleet emotion fast.

Then, should thy verse appear
 Halting and harsh, and all unaptly wrought,
 Touch the crude line with fear,

Save in the moment of impassioned thought;
 Then summon back the original glow, and mend
 The strain with rapture that with fire was
 penned.¹

5 Yet let no empty gust
 Of passion find an utterance in thy lay,
 A blast that whirls the dust
 Along the howling street and dies away,
 10 But feelings of calm power and mighty sweep,
 Like currents journeying through the windless
 deep.

Seek'st thou, in living lays,
 15 To limn the beauty of the earth and sky?
 Before thine inner gaze
 Let all that beauty in clear vision lie;
 Look on it with exceeding love, and write
 The words inspired by wonder and delight.

20 Of tempests wouldst thou sing,
 Or tell of battles—make thyself a part
 Of the great tumult; cling
 To the tossed wreck with terror in thy heart;
 25 Scale, with the assaulting host, the rampart's
 height,
 And strike and struggle in the thickest fight.

So shalt thou frame a lay
 30 That haply may endure from age to age,
 And they who read shall say:
 "What witchery hangs upon this poet's page!
 What art is his the written spells to find
 That sway from mood to mood the willing
 35 mind!"

THE DEATH OF LINCOLN

(April, 1865)

40 In this simple and moving poem Bryant makes no
 attempt to estimate Lincoln's greatness. It is a trib-
 ute to the emancipator and the martyr.

Oh, slow to smite and swift to spare,
 Gentle and merciful and just!
 45 Who, in the fear of God, didst bear
 The sword of power, a nation's trust!

¹ Compare the following passage in a letter of Bryant's, November 2, 1833: "In mending a faulty passage in cold blood, we often do more mischief, by attending to particulars and neglecting the entire construction and sequence of ideas, than we do good."

1802-1828-----EDWARD COOTE PINKNEY

In sorrow by thy bier we stand,
Amid the awe that hushes all,
And speak the anguish of a land
That shook with horror at thy fall.

Thy task is done; the bond are free:
We bear thee to an honored grave,

Whose proudest monument shall be
The broken fetters of the slave.

Pure was thy life, its bloody close
5 Hath placed thee with the sons of light,
Among the noble host of those
Who perished in the cause of Right.

EDWARD COOTE PINKNEY

1802 - 1828

Pinkney, the son of a Maryland diplomat, was born in London. At ten he returned to America. He was in the U. S. Navy from 1815 to 1824, when he resigned, married, and was admitted to the bar. He issued a slender volume of *Poems* in 1825. He died before he was twenty-six. *The Life and Works of Edward Coote Pinkney* (1826) by T. O. Mabbott and F. L. Pleadwell, gives the only adequate account of Pinkney's life and is the only scholarly edition of his works. From this volume, says Louis Untermeyer, "there emerges the apparition of a typically hot-blooded Southerner, ready for dueling rather than delay, sensitive to the point of morbidity—a born poet, but a poet doomed." All the poems given here were published in the 1825 volume except "Melancholy's Curse of Feasts," which was first published in the *Emerald and Baltimore Literary Gazette* about six months after Pinkney's death. Most critics have noted the resemblance of Pinkney's poems to the Cavalier lyrics of the seventeenth century.

SONG

(1825)

We break the glass, whose sacred wine
To some beloved health we drain,
Lest future pledges, less divine,
Should e'er the hallowed toy profane;
And thus I broke a heart, that poured
Its tide of feelings out to thee,

In draughts, by after-times deplored,
Yet dear to memory.

But still the old empassioned ways
5 And habits of my mind remain,
And still unhappy light displays
Thine image chambered in my brain,
And still it looks as when the hours
Went by like flights of singing birds,

NATIONALISM AND ROMANTICISM-----1789-1830

Or that soft chain of spoken flowers,
And airy gems, thy words.

ELYSIUM

(From an unfinished Poem)

(1825)

She dwelleth in Elysium; there,
Like Echo, floating in the air;
Feeding on light as feed the flowers,
She fleets away uncounted hours,
Where halcyon Peace, among the blest,
Sits brooding o'er her tranquil nest.

She needs no impulse; one she is,
Whom thought supplies with ample bliss.
The fancies fashioned in her mind
By heaven, are after its own kind,
Like sky-reflections in a lake,
Whose calm no winds occur to break.

Her memory is purified,
And she seems never to have sighed:
She hath forgot the way to weep,
Her being is a joyous sleep;
The mere imagining of pain,
Hath passed, and cannot come again.

Except of pleasure most intense
And constant, she hath lost all sense;
Her life is day without a night,
And endless, innocent delight;

No chance her happiness now mars,
Howe'er Fate twine *her* wreaths of stars.

5 And palpable and pure, the part,
Which pleasure playeth with her heart;
For every joy that seeks the maid,
Foregoes its common painful shade,
Like shapes that issue from the grove,
Arcadian, dedicate to Jove.

10

SERENADE

(1825)

15 Look out upon the stars, my love,
And shame them with thine eyes,
On which, than on the lights above,
There hang more destinies
20 Night's beauty is the harmony
Of blending shades and light;
Then, Lady, up,—look out, and be
A sister to the night!—
25 Sleep not!—thine image wakes for aye,
Within my watching breast:
Sleep not!—from her soft sleep should fly,
Who robs all hearts of rest.
Nay, Lady, from thy slumbers break,
30 And make this darkness gay,
With looks, whose brightness well might make
Of darker nights a day.

A HEALTH

(1825)

Poe quoted this poem in "The Poetic Principle," and added the following comment:

"It was the misfortune of Mr. Pinckney to have been born too far south. Had he been a New Englander, it is probable that he would have been ranked as the first of American lyrists, by that magnanimous cabal which has so long controlled the destinies of American Letters, in conducting the thing called the 'North American Review.' The poem just cited is especially beautiful; but the poetic elevation which it induces, we must refer chiefly to our sympathy in the poet's enthusiasm. We pardon his hyperboles for the evident earnestness with which they are uttered."

I fill this cup to one made up of loveliness alone,
A woman of her gentle sex the seeming paragon;
To whom the better elements and kindly stars have given,
A form so fair, that, like the air, 'tis less of earth than heaven.

Her every tone is music's own, like those of morning birds,
And something more than melody dwells ever in her words;
The coinage of her heart are they, and from her lips each flows
As one may see the burthened bee forth issue from the rose.

5

Affections are as thoughts to her, the measures of her hours,
Her feelings have the fragrancy, the freshness, of young flowers;
And lovely passions, changing oft, so fill her, she appears
The image of themselves by turns,—the idol of past years!

10

Of her bright face one glance will trace a picture on the brain,
And of her voice in echoing hearts a sound must long remain,
But memory such as mine of her so very much endears,
When death is nigh my latest sigh will not be life's but hers.

15

I filled this cup to one made up of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex the seeming paragon—
Her health! and would on earth there stood some more of such a frame,
That life might be all poetry, and weariness a name.

THE WIDOW'S SONG

(1825)

I burn no incense, hang no wreath,
On this, thine early tomb:
Such cannot cheer the place of death,
But only mock its gloom.
Here odorous smoke and breathing flower 5
No grateful influence shed;
They lose their perfume and their power,
When offered to the dead.

And if, as is the Afghaun's creed, 10
The spirit may return,
A disembodied sense to feed,
On fragrance, near its urn—
It is enough, that she, whom thou
Did'st love in living years, 15
Sits desolate beside it now,
And falls these heavy tears.

MELANCHOLY'S CURSE OF FEASTS

(1828)

Pale, funeral flowers
His drinking garlands twine;
The star, named "Wormwood," fall
On the grape's tears, his wine!

A lacrymary glass
To him his goblet be;
Along the lighted board,
No gladness let him see!

Hang shadowy skeletons
In his Egyptian halls;
Be dark handwritings traced
On his Assyrian walls!

Let each vase seemle well
A cinerary urn;
Its fruit, to ashes like
The dead sea apples, turn!

Thus into wretched mirth
Of hours, his life compress,—
A miserable mass
Of grief and drunkenness. 25

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING

1780 - 1842

*It will be seen, that we include under literature all the writings of superior minds,
be the subjects what they may.*

—WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING, "Remarks on National Literature" (1830).

Dr. Channing was the great Unitarian preacher and thinker of his time. He was in a sense the link between Unitarianism and Transcendentalism, and his influence upon Emerson was considerable. His writings attracted wide attention, being reviewed by William Hazlitt in the *Edinburgh Review* for October, 1829. The best of his literary essays are "Remarks on the Character and Writings of John Milton" and "Remarks on National Literature." There are biographies by his nephew, W. H. Channing (1848), and J. W. Chadwick (1903). See also Robert E. Spiller, "A Case for Channing," *New England Quarterly*, III, 55-81 (January, 1930).

"The Moral Argument against Calvinism," originally published in *The Christian Disciple* in 1820, is an able statement of the Unitarian case against the theology of Jonathan Edwards, which by 1820 was fast losing ground in urban New England. Eighteen years later Emerson was delivering the *Dwinity School Address* in Cambridge.

from THE MORAL ARGUMENT AGAINST CALVINISM

(1820)

--- Calvinism teaches, that in consequence of Adam's sin in eating the forbidden fruit. God brings into life all his posterity with a nature wholly corrupt, so that they are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all that

5 is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually. It teaches, that all mankind, having fallen in Adam, are under God's wrath and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever. It teaches, that from this ruined race God out of his mere good pleasure has elected a certain number to be saved by Christ, not induced to this choice by any foresight of

their faith or good works, but wholly by his free grace and love, and that having thus predestinated them to eternal life, he renews and sanctifies them by his almighty and special agency, and brings them into a state of grace, from which they cannot fall and perish. It teaches, that the rest of mankind he is pleased to pass over, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sins, to the honour of his justice and power, in other words, he leaves the rest to the corruption in which they were born, withholds the grace which is necessary to their recovery, and condemns them to "most grievous torments in soul and body without intermission in hell fire forever." Such is Calvinism, as gathered from the most authentic records of the doctrine. Whoever will consult the famous Assembly's Catechisms and Confession, will see the peculiarities of the system in all their length and breadth of deformity. A man of plain sense, whose spirit has not been broken to this creed by education or terror, will think that it is not necessary for us to travel to heathen countries, to learn how mournfully the human mind may misrepresent the Deity.---

We shall conclude this discussion with an important inquiry. If God's justice and goodness are consistent with those operations and modes of government, which Calvinism ascribes to him, of what use is our belief in these perfections? What expectations can we found upon them? If it consist with divine rectitude to consign to everlasting misery, beings who have come guilty and impotent from his hand, we beg to know what interest we have in this rectitude, what pledge of good it contains, or what evil can be imagined which may not be its natural result? If justice and goodness, when stretched to infinity, take such strange forms and appear in such unexpected and apparently inconsistent operations, how are we sure, that they will not give up the best men to ruin, and leave the universe to the powers of darkness? Such results indeed seem incompatible with these attributes, but not more so than the acts attributed to God by Calvinism. It is said, that the divine faithfulness is pledged in the Scriptures to a happier issue of things? But why should not divine faithfulness transcend our poor understandings as much as divine goodness and justice, and why may not God, consistently with this attribute, crush every hope which his Word has raised? Thus all the di-

vine perfections are lost to us as grounds of encouragement and consolation, if we maintain, that their infinity places them beyond our judgment, and that we must expect from them measures and operations entirely opposed to what seems to us most accordant with their nature.

We have thus endeavoured to show that the testimony of our rational and moral faculties against Calvinism is worthy of trust. We know that this reasoning will be met by the question, What then becomes of Christianity? for this religion plainly teaches the doctrines you have condemned. Our answer is ready. Christianity contains no such doctrines. Christianity, reason, and conscience, are perfectly harmonious on the subject under discussion. Our religion, fairly construed, gives no countenance to that system, which has arrogated to itself the distinction of Evangelical. We cannot, however, enter this field at present. We will only say, that the general spirit of Christianity affords a very strong presumption, that its records teach no such doctrines as we have opposed. This spirit is love, charity, benevolence. Christianity, we all agree, is designed to manifest God as perfect benevolence, and to bring men to love and imitate him. Now is it probable, that a religion, having this object, gives views of the Supreme Being, from which our moral convictions and benevolent sentiments shrink with horror, and which if made our pattern, would convert us into monsters! It is plain that were a human parent to form himself on the universal Father, as described by Calvinism, that is, were he to bring his children into life totally depraved, and then to pursue them with endless punishment, we should charge him with a cruelty not surpassed in the annals of the world! or were a sovereign to incapacitate his subjects in any way whatever for obeying his laws, and then to torture them in dungeons of perpetual woe, we should say, that history records no darker crime. And is it probable that a religion, which aims to attract and assimilate us to God, considered as love, should hold him up to us in these heart-withering characters? We may confidently expect to find in such a system, the brightest views of the divine nature; and the same objections lie against interpretations of its records, which savour of cruelty and injustice, as lie against the literal sense of passages which ascribe to God bodily wants and organs. Let the Scriptures be read

with a recollection of the Spirit of Christianity, and with that modification of particular texts by this general spirit, which a just criticism requires, and Calvinism would no more enter the mind of the reader, than Popery—we had almost said, than Heathenism. - - -

Calvinism, we are persuaded, is giving place to better views. It has passed its meridian, and is sinking, to rise no more. It has to contend with foes more formidable than theologians, with 10
foes from whom it cannot shield itself in mystery and metaphysical subtleties, we mean with the progress of the human mind, and with the progress of the spirit of the Gospel. Society is going forward in intelligence and charity, and of 15
course is leaving the theology of the sixteenth century behind it. We hail this revolution of

opinion as a most auspicious event to the Christian cause. We hear much at present of efforts to spread the Gospel. But Christianity is gaining more by the removal of degrading errors, than it 5
would by armies of missionaries who should carry with them a corrupted form of the religion. We think the decline of Calvinism one of the most encouraging facts in our passing history; for this system, by outraging conscience and reason, tends to array these high faculties against 10
revelation. Its errors are peculiarly mournful, because they relate to the character of God. It darkens and stains his pure nature; spoils his character of its sacredness, loveliness, glory; and thus quenches the central light of the universe, 15
makes existence a curse, and the extinction of it a consummation devoutly to be wished. - - -

IV

*AMERICAN
RENAISSANCE*

1830 - 1870

AMERICAN RENAISSANCE

1830-1870

The dominant figure in the upper center is Abraham Lincoln, reading the Gettysburg Address as he stands on the "cornerstone" of the Union. Beneath and to the left are Walt Whitman, the Transcendentalists, and the Abolitionists. In the foreground stands Harriet Beecher Stowe. Behind her appear the faces of Bronson Alcott, Whittier, Longfellow, and Thoreau. Behind these are Horace Greeley, Frederick Douglass, and William Lloyd Garrison.

In the lower left-hand corner sits Emerson with Dr. Holmes just behind him. Above them is John Brown on the scaffold, and, above him, the figure evoked by "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," "trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored." In the distance are a locomotive and wheels, representing the industrial revolution.

At the bottom are the three statesmen, Webster, Calhoun, and Clay. In the lower right-hand corner is Poe, with Lowell beside him and Henry Timrod just behind. Above is Nathaniel Hawthorne and, above him, Herman Melville on a ship's prow. In the distance the Capitol and the Washington Monument symbolize survival of the Union.

AMERICAN RENAISSANCE

1830 - 1870

Literature becomes free institutions. . . let us hope that, as it is our fortune to live in an age when we may behold a wonderful advancement of the country in all its other great interests, we may see also equal progress and success attend the cause of letters.

—DANIEL WEBSTER, "First Settlement of New England" (1820).

We used to believe them [Emerson and his New England contemporaries] heralds of the future; already we begin to perceive that they were rather chroniclers of times which shall be no more.

BARRETT WENDELL, *A Literary History of America* (1900), p. 446.

The forty years extending from 1830 to 1870 saw the most remarkable development that had yet taken place in American literature. The promise of the preceding periods came at last to real fulfillment. The Romantic Movement, reaching its American climax after its English decline, gave us a literature comparable in quality and range to that of Victorian England; and much of it could have been written nowhere but in America. The most striking aspect of the period is the literary rise of New England, for this is the age of Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes, Whittier, and a number of less important writers. The South is represented by Poe, Kennedy, Simms, Longstreet, Timrod, Hayne, and the humorists of the old Southwest. In the Middle Atlantic States we have the continued work of Irving, Cooper, and Bryant and, in addition, that of Melville.

I

The Era of Good Feeling, which had followed the War of 1812, was succeeded by a period of sectional hostility which culminated in the Civil War. The traditional antagonism between East and West was overshadowed by the increasing hostility between North and South. In reality, the sections had never been amalgamated into a nation. Leading statesmen—notably Henry Clay—fought against the strong sectional tendencies. Andrew Jackson, President from 1829 to 1837, was, like Calhoun, a Southerner; but his attitude during the Nullification crisis of 1832 was a thoroughly national one. In 1830, when excitement was already running high, he gave at the Jefferson birthday dinner his famous toast: "The Federal Union—it must be preserved!" Calhoun's defiant reply—"The Union—next to our liberty, the most dear!"—aptly expressed the feelings of many Southerners.

Only in recent years have historians come to something like general agreement in regard to the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the long sectional conflict which preceded them. Southern historians have at last learned to study the period realistically instead of writing justifications of the Lost Cause, and Northern historians have ceased to believe in a gigantic Southern conspiracy to break up the Union. Professor S. E. Morison writes in *The Oxford History of the United States*: "One theory, invented by the abolitionists, made orthodox by the Republican party, and given literary currency by such men as James Russell Lowell, regards the American colonization of Texas, the Texan annexation to the United States, and the Mexican War, as the fruit of a gigantic conspiracy of Southern politicians to get 'Bigger pens to cram with slaves.'" In *The Rise of the Common Man*, the late Carl Russell Fish wrote of ex-President John Quincy Adams: "In a devastating speech, lasting one hour a day for a month, he created the terrifying bogie of a slavocracy or Slave Power, sleepless and malevolent, which was to become one of the forces rallying the North to the antislavery banner in the fifties, and which, exploited by Von Holst, dominated the accepted view of American history for fifty years."

The fundamental reasons for the antagonism between South and North were economic. The one used slave labor, the other, free, the South was agricultural, the North at this time largely industrial. The South had in a sense always constituted a "conscious minority," jealous of its rights; and it became increasingly suspicious of the growing power of the central government. The rapid increase of the North in population and in wealth threatened the old balance of political power embodied in the Missouri Compromise of 1820. The rise of the radical Abolitionists—coming just after the Southampton slave insurrection—seemed a direct threat against the foundation of Southern economic life. New inventions, such as the cotton gin and the spinning jenny, had made slavery profitable again. Southern politicians finally threw over Jefferson's ideal as impractical and, for perhaps the first time, undertook to defend slavery on principle—at the very time when it had disappeared from the rest of the civilized world. (An excellent discussion of Calhoun's conception of a "Greek democracy" is found in V. L. Parrington's *Main Currents in American Thought*.) A minority of Southern fire-eaters would not be satisfied with anything less than the right to take their slaves into any part of the Union. The two things which finally aroused the North and the Northwest were the fear of slavery in the northern territories and the stringent Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, which prompted Emerson to write in his journal in July of the next year: "This filthy enactment was made in the nineteenth century, by people who could read and write. I will not obey it, by God."

Under the leadership of William Lloyd Garrison, who established the *Liberator* in 1831, the antislavery movement took on new vigor and bitterness. He denounced the federal Constitution, because it protected slavery, as "a covenant with death and an agreement with hell." From one point of view, the Abolitionists—notably Garrison, Whittier, and Wendell Phillips—seem comparable to the Hebrew prophets denouncing the enemies of righteousness; and they have often been so regarded. But present-day historians, who are far better economists, often view them as doctrinaires, ignorant of the realities against which they were fighting. What surprises the modern student is their almost total lack of first-hand knowledge of the slave economy. Mrs. Stowe had seen a slave plantation, but apparently Garrison, Phillips, and Whittier had not; and they were willing to believe anything they heard provided

it were to the discredit of slavery. James Truslow Adams writes in *America's Tragedy* (1934): "They made no allowance for their own error, no allowance for the historic process which had fastened slavery on the South, no allowance for the economic and social problems involved in emancipation, no allowance for the hundreds of thousands of honorable, kindly white masters who found themselves caught in the nexus of a type of civilization which the world was only suddenly beginning to denounce. As is the way of reforming zealots always, they struck out venomously at the morality of all who differed with them." But for the Abolitionists and the Southern fire-eaters, the Civil War might have been avoided, for—at least in the older Southern states—it was a moribund institution, and geographic conditions were such that slavery could never be profitable farther west than Texas or north of the Ohio.

The Civil War put an end to slavery, if not to the race problem, and it made the nation an economic unit such as it had never before been. After the South in the 'eighties and 'nineties became reconciled to the situation, the United States might at last be called, in the full sense of the word, a nation. During the period we are discussing, however, it was an aggregation of sections; and American literature was in considerable measure the sum of the various sectional literatures. The Civil War had other consequences. An important one was the increased respect of Europe for the nation which had survived the ordeal of internal war. The Civil War speeded up the process of industrializing the nation, and it left industrialism with no serious rival in South or West, for the South had been the chief critic of industrialism, and Appomattox left the nation without a real exponent of any other way of life.

II

The election to the Presidency in 1828 of Andrew Jackson of Tennessee marked the end of the Virginia-Massachusetts dynasty which had held that office since 1789. Jackson's predecessors had all been Eastern men of good family, and all of them after Washington had been college-bred. Jackson was a self-made man; and, although born on the line separating the two Carolinas, he had spent most of his life in the Southwest. He had practiced law in Tennessee, acquired property, distinguished himself in the Indian wars, and become a national hero by beating the veteran troops of Wellington at New Orleans. It is true that in Tennessee his political record had been like that of other large landholders, but that circumstance did not interfere with his being elected as the champion of the common people.

His predecessor, John Quincy Adams, would not even attend the inaugural ceremonies. Cultivated men and women, noting the swarms of common people in the White House, upsetting the punchbowls, breaking glasses, and standing with muddy feet on fine damask chairs, felt that, as Justice Story put it, "The reign of King Mob seemed triumphant." One lady was reminded of how Paris mobs had behaved in the royal palaces during the French Revolution. Daniel Webster thought the crowds behaved as though they felt "the country is rescued from some dreadful danger." Even after Jackson had been in the White House for five years, Emerson wrote to Carlyle: "A most unfit person in the Presidency has been doing the worst things; the worse he grew, the more popular."

Jackson's election marked a revival, with a difference, of Jeffersonian democracy. He had been the candidate of what might with some exaggeration be called a farmer-labor party. It was made up in large part of Southern and Western farmers and of Eastern workmen, who were just beginning to organize. The actual issues, about which the voters were not

very clear, were, as in many later elections, primarily economic rather than political. The rapid rise of industrialism in the Northeast had lowered the economic and social status of workers and given them a feeling of insecurity. A high protective tariff had benefited Eastern traders and manufacturers, but it had borne hard upon Southern and Western farmers. Men were coming to feel that the government was helping to build up a plutocracy, an aristocracy of capital which was fast superseding the old aristocracy of landholders. Control of big business had become a political issue. Jackson and his followers hated in particular the Bank of the United States, which under the management of the arrogant Nicholas Biddle seemed a threat to the welfare of the people. In a Farewell Address issued shortly before his retirement in 1837 Jackson wrote:

"The agricultural, the mechanical, and the laboring classes, have little or no share in the direction of the great moneyed corporations; and from their habits and the nature of their pursuits, they are incapable of forming extensive combinations to act together with unified force. . . . Yet these classes of society form the great body of the people of the United States; they are the bone and sinew of the country; men who love liberty and desire nothing but equal rights and equal laws, and who, moreover, hold the great mass of our national wealth, although it is distributed in moderate amounts among the millions of freemen who possess it. But, with overwhelming numbers and wealth on their side, they are in constant danger of losing their fair influence in the Government, and with difficulty maintain their just rights against the incessant efforts daily made to encroach upon them. The mischief springs from the power which the moneyed interest derives from a paper currency, which they are able to control; from the multitude of corporations, with exclusive privileges, which they have succeeded in obtaining in the different States, and which are employed altogether for their benefit; and unless you become more watchful in your States, and check this spirit of monopoly and thirst for exclusive privileges, you will, in the end, find that the most important powers of Government have been given or bartered away, and the control over your dearest interests has passed into the hands of these corporations."

The Jackson party abolished the Bank, but it did little to remedy the abuses of the new industrial order, and it extended the spoils system to an alarming degree. Among its achievements was the gradual extension, in the South as well as in the North and the West, of the right to vote to many who had not had that protection. The movement produced no great philosophical writer, like John Locke, and no great economist, like Adam Smith, to organize and put into memorable form its fundamental ideas.

The relation of the Jackson movement to literature is somewhat unusual. Among writers in sympathy with it were Bryant, Cooper, Hawthorne, Whitman, Seba Smith, and George Bancroft the historian. In the *Democratic Review*, edited by John L. O'Sullivan, the movement had an organ which published some of the writings of Bryant, Hawthorne, Whittier, Thoreau, Simms, and Whitman. Hawthorne was an admirer of Jackson and hardly the lukewarm Democrat that many have supposed. Cooper, much as he disliked a certain leveling tendency in American social life, in the main held to Jacksonian principles. As a landed proprietor, he had little use for the new plutocracy of big business. Walt Whitman attempted to create an American poetry which should be in part the logical expression of the Jacksonian ideal. Poe and Thoreau were each too much the individualist to care for the doctrines of any

party. Emerson's attitude was somewhat equivocal. In his essay on "Politics" he wrote: "Of the two great parties which at this hour almost share the nation between them, I should say that one has the best cause, and the other contains the best men." Emerson chose rather to align himself with the well-to-do Boston businessmen rather than with the common people whom Whitman loved. Nevertheless he saw some hope that "this rank rabble party, the Jacksonism of the country, heedless of English and of all literature . . . may root out the hollow dilettantism of our cultivation," which seemed to him so heavily dependent upon England. The Transcendentalists were intensely individualistic, and so Emerson, Thoreau, Alcott, and others had little use for either party. And yet the opinions they expressed often showed a sympathy with Jacksonian doctrines.

III

"It was America's awkward age," says S. E. Morison. "The rather attractive child who had left his parents' roof, the marvellous boy who had proclaimed great truths (or perhaps delusions) to a candid world, was now a gawky hobbledohoy." James Truslow Adams, who is also struck by "the youthfulness of the whole period," points out, in his *New England in the Republic*, that the period is not "America's maturity nor even its coming of age, but its adolescence—the sudden discovery of romance, of culture, of altruism, of optimism, of self-reliance, and the sense of one's own individuality." In a time of pessimism and self-criticism like that of today, it is difficult for us to sympathize with the complacent optimism of the mid-nineteenth century. Apart from slavery, there was little dissatisfaction with American institutions, whether those institutions were economic, social, political, or religious. Victorian England was becoming disillusioned, but America still cherished the Romantic belief in the perfectibility of man.

In their Editors' Foreword to Fish's *Rise of the Common Man*, Dixon Ryan Fox and Arthur M. Schlesinger write of the years 1830-1850:

"The cultural heritage of the American people during these years was essentially an aristocratic one; even the efforts of the preceding generation for cultural independence had affected little the life of the masses. In the eyes of the new generation it was quite as important to abolish special privileges respecting cultural property as those in respect to physical possessions. . . . For the first time in history a people faced the problem—today ever with us—of whether the finer fruits of civilization can be democratized without being vulgarized."

In this time of increased opportunities for the middle and lower classes there was a considerable widening of the reading public, but along with it went a rapid vulgarization of manners and perhaps a decline in morals. The vulgarity of American life impressed British travelers like Dickens and Mrs. Trollope. The old aristocracy was declining in the North as well as in the South, and its place was gradually being usurped by a plutocracy which cared little for birth, breeding, culture, art, or manners. The tendency was to value everything in terms of money. The decline in taste is less evident in literature than in furniture, architecture, dress, and manners. After all deductions are made, there is some compensation in the fact that culture was no longer the exclusive prerogative of the few.

From this period down to our own time foreign and native critics have noted the feminization of American education, culture, and literature. "Feminine control [of society] at that time," says Carl Russell Fish, "meant a more than Victorian censorship of art, literature and

the stage. It created an atmosphere that welcomed poetry and tragedy, but did not encourage humor." Hawthorne complained of "the damned mob of scribbling women." In *The Genteel Female* (1931), Clifton J. Furness writes:

"This difference between our indigenous writings and the literature of other nations is partially accounted for by the circumstance that the greater part of our literary output has been created and conditioned principally by a feminine reading public, whereas the greater part of the rest of the world's literature has been moulded chiefly by and for men.

"Our American voice has from the beginning bordered upon a feminine falsetto. Even when an occasional virile bass sounds from the throat of a Whitman or a Sandburg, the inevitable soprano of the female is heard ringing through it, as undertone or overtone. . . . In the arts, in literature, in music, America is the woman's land."

The evils of the genteel tradition in our literature, however, cannot be wholly attributed to the influence of women. In a chapter on "The Reign of the Genteel," Professor V. L. Parrington wrote:

"The essence of the genteel tradition was a refined ethicism, that professed to discover the highest virtue in shutting one's eyes to disagreeable fact, and the highest law in the law of convention. . . . It was Victorianism of a more maidenly purity than the English strain, so carefully filtered by passing through the close Puritan mesh that the smallest impurities were removed. The first of literary commandments was the commandment of reticence. Literature was conceived of as belonging to the library and the drawing-room, and it must observe the drawing-room amenities. Only a vulgarian would lug a spade there. Any venture into realism was likely to prove libidinous, and sure to be common."

IV

In his chapter on "Book Publishers and Publishing" in *The Cambridge History of American Literature*, Earl L. Bradsher writes: ". . . the great outstanding factor in the history of our publishing in the nineteenth century is the absence of and the struggle for an international copyright law. Much of the development of the short story in America, the rise to commanding position of the American magazine, the stifling of the American playwright for three quarters of a century, and the desperate struggle of all save our greatest novelists against grave difficulties until 1891 may be traced to the want of such a law." In 1841 Emerson wrote to Carlyle that a certain New York "corsair" had brought out a pirated edition of *Heroes and Hero-Worship* and driven the authorized American publisher from the market. "Not only have these men made a book," he adds, ". . . but the New York newspapers print the book in chapters, and you circulate for six cents per newspaper at the corners of all streets in New York and Boston; gaining in fame what you lose in coin." Not all the publishers were pirates, however. Harper and Brothers paid Thackeray £400 for *The Virginians* and Dickens £1,250 for *Great Expectations*. Some of the publishers were active in trying to secure the passage of an international copyright law, which, however, was not accomplished until 1891. Meanwhile popular American authors, like Cooper and Longfellow, suffered from British and Canadian pirates. During this period the number of books by American authors published in this country rapidly increased. Some figures are given by the publisher,

1830-1870-----AMERICAN RENAISSANCE

Samuel G. Goodrich ("Peter Parley"), in his *Recollections of a Lifetime*. Of the books printed in America in 1820, Goodrich calculates that seventy per cent were by British authors. By 1830 books written by Americans amounted to forty per cent of the total, and in 1856 to seventy per cent.

It is difficult to obtain full and reliable information on the financial returns received by authors for books and magazine articles. Bradsher states that the total income from Emerson's literary labors has been estimated at a little more than thirty thousand dollars. Fitz-Greene Halleck, a popular Knickerbocker poet is said to have earned \$17,500—or about a dollar a day on the average. In a letter to Thomas Hughes in 1887, Lowell referred to "my general copyrights, for which I am paid £400 a year. Not much after nearly fifty years of authorship," he adds, "but enough to keep me from the almshouse." The best-paid of the magazinists was N. P. Willis, who in the early 'forties was making about \$4800 a year. F. L. Mott calculates that in the year 1843 Poe's contributions to magazines brought him only about three hundred dollars. *Graham's Magazine* and *Godey's Lady's Book* were the best-paying magazines of the time. Poe received from Graham four or five dollars a page, while Willis was paid more than twice as much. In 1851 George Henry Boker wrote to Richard Henry Stoddard: "Alas! Dick, is it not sad that an American author cannot live by magazine writing?" In this period, as in the preceding one, few authors were able to support themselves by their pens. Melville finally gave up the struggle and took a place in the New York Customs House. Poe was a magazinist to the end of his life, but he and his family nearly starved on what he earned. Emerson and other New England authors resorted to the lecture lyceum to supplement their income from books and magazine articles. Even Longfellow, the most popular poet of the time, did not give up teaching until 1854. He got only fifteen dollars for "The Village Blacksmith" in 1840 or 1841, but his rate of pay increased rapidly. "Mori-turi Salutamus" brought him a thousand dollars, and "The Hanging of the Crane" three thousand.

The rise of the annuals and gift-books made authorship somewhat more profitable than it had been in the preceding period. These were handsomely bound and illustrated miscellanies containing stories, essays, and poems and designed chiefly for women readers. The fashion had spread from Germany to England and thence to America. Around the middle of the century they are said to have averaged about sixty a year. They were often juvenile and sentimental, but they published some of the best work of Poe and Hawthorne. One of the best of them was the *Token*, published by Goodrich in Boston and notable for the number of Hawthorne's tales which first appeared in it.

"In the years immediately following 1825," says F. L. Mott in *A History of American Magazines, 1741-1850*, "there was an extraordinary outburst of magazine activity which paralleled the expansion in many other lines of development; . . ." By 1850 there were six times as many American magazines as there had been in 1825. The rise of the magazines brought new opportunities for American authors in spite of the fact that most magazines paid their contributors little or nothing. The American magazine ceased to model itself upon the British quarterlies and became a thoroughly national institution. Most Americans derived their culture from magazines rather than from books. There were many magazines designed for women. The most notable of these was *Godey's Lady's Book*, founded in 1830 and ably edited for many years by Mrs. Sarah Joseph Hale, who was also the author of "Mary Had a Little Lamb."

AMERICAN RENAISSANCE-----1830-1870

One of the most influential magazines of the 'forties was *Graham's Magazine* which published some of Poe's best work. The two magazines mentioned above were both published in Philadelphia, but no city had such a monopoly of magazines as New York came to have in the latter part of the century. The best of the Southern magazines were the *Southern Literary Messenger* (1834-1864), once edited by Poe, and the *Southern Quarterly Review* (1842-1857), which Simms edited for five or six years. Of the numerous magazines founded in the West, we mention only the *Western Messenger* (1835-1841), published in Cincinnati and Louisville. Under the leadership of transplanted New Englanders, the *Messenger* became practically a Transcendentalist organ, a forerunner of the *Dial*. Among the more notable New York magazines were the *Knickerbocker Magazine* (1833-1865) and the *Union Magazine of Literature and Art* (1847-1852)—later *Sartain's Union Magazine*—edited for a time by Carolina Matilda Kirkland, author of *A New Home—Who'll Follow?* Besides the *North American Review*, founded in 1815, New England had two important periodicals. The earliest of these was the *Dial* (1840-1844), edited first by Margaret Fuller and later by Emerson. Although the circulation of this Transcendentalist organ never reached three hundred, it has received more attention from our literary historians than other periodicals because it published much significant writing by Emerson, Thoreau, and other Transcendentalists. With the founding in 1857 of the *Atlantic Monthly* under the editorship of James Russell Lowell, the New England group found at last a suitable literary medium for their best work. Every student who has the opportunity should examine the early volumes of this magazine and of as many others as he can. In no other way can he better learn to understand the literary tastes of the period.

With the rapid development of the American magazine, the newspaper lost something of its literary importance. The newspapers, however, were the chief medium of the humorists, whose work now seems in some ways more important than when it was new. American newspapers were denounced by many European visitors. See, for example, the selection from Dickens's *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Mrs. Frances Trollope wrote in her *Domestic Manners of the Americans*: "The veracity of newspaper statements is, perhaps, nowhere quite unimpeachable, but if I am not greatly mistaken, there are more direct falsehoods circulated by the American newspapers than by all the others in the world, and the one great and never-failing source of these voluminous works of imagination is England and the English."

V

As we look back to the middle of the nineteenth century, Boston seems our most important literary center. It was not by any means, however, the only one, and New York and Philadelphia published more books than Boston. New York was already aspiring to be the literary capital. Horace Greeley wrote in 1839: "New York has become the metropolis, in our country, not only of commerce, but of literature and the arts." New York had numerous minor writers—many of them discussed in Poe's "The Literati"—but nearly all of them have been forgotten except Melville and Whitman and two writers who belong primarily to an earlier period: Irving and Bryant.

There was no little literary activity in the Middle West in this period, but not until after the Civil War did the West produce anything that can be said really to survive. Professor R. L. Rusk's *The Literature of the Middle Western Frontier* is a mine of information for those interested in the literary product of that section before 1840. If we set aside Poe, Mel-

ville, and Whitman, the major writers of this period are all New Englanders. For that reason, in our brief survey we shall give to that section what might otherwise seem entirely too much space. The somewhat anomalous case of the South will be discussed in Section IX of this chapter.

Our literary history received almost no attention from scholars until after 1870. There were, however, anthologists of some ability. Rufus Wilmot Griswold, ex-clergyman, magazineist, editor of Poe's works, brought out *The Poets and Poetry of America* (1842 and several later editions), *The Prose Writers of America* (1847), and *The Female Poets of America* (1848). Oliver Wendell Holmes once remarked: "What a curious creature Griswold is! He seems to me a kind of naturalist whose subjects are authors, whose memory is a perfect fauna of all flying, running, and creeping things that feed on ink." Poe accused Griswold of giving too much space to New England and not enough to the South and the West. Somewhat more useful than the Griswold anthologies is the two-volume *Cyclopædia of American Literature* (1855), edited by two New York literati, Evert A. and George L. Duyckinck. Neither Griswold nor the Duyckinck brothers discriminated sufficiently between really important authors and merely popular writers. For instance, Griswold, in the eighth edition (1847) of *The Poets and Poetry of America*, gave eleven pages to Charles Fenno Hoffman and only four to Poe, he gave the same number—five—to Emerson and to Rufus Dawes.

VI

The period which we have called American Renaissance might more accurately have been described as The Ascendancy of Seaboard Massachusetts. Of the important New England writers, only Longfellow was born outside the state, and all of them lived in Boston or in Cambridge or Concord near by. In the years 1803-1819 New England gave birth to a group of writers who are comparable to the Virginia statesmen of the Revolutionary period. It seems worth while to attempt here to reconstruct briefly the background in which these men lived and wrote. They seem so remote from our America of the twentieth century that it is not always easy for the casual reader to convince himself that they ever actually lived. They are victims of the "Victorian" legend. Mrs. Henrietta Dana Skinner, who knew them well, wrote in 1928:

"Growing up in such environment [Cambridge], poets and authors, scientists and statesmen seemed to us children quite natural, everyday people. They were as thick as blackberries in our little world. We did not know they were exceptional. They were not held up to us as heroes or idols. We, as little pigmies on the Victorian Parnassus, saw them only as familiar, friendly figures, who always had most interesting things to talk about. We saw them as men of flesh and blood—of keen wit and flashing humor, like James Russell Lowell, poet, essayist and diplomat, or Oliver Wendell Holmes, distinguished both as scientist and as poet. . . .

"Small wonder, then, that I frequently bristle when the critics and writers of a younger generation, who can have no personal knowledge of these men or of the age they lived in, hold up before us curious figures of their own devising which they label 'Victorians' and endow with characteristics which they like to attribute to 'Puritanism' and 'Victorianism'—figures of straw, which, as I can testify vigorously, bear little if any resemblance to the living figures of my youthful memories."

"... the highest development of intellectual life in New England," says Barrett Wendell, "coincided with its greatest material prosperity." Seaboard Massachusetts in the mid-nineteenth century had the wealth and leisure upon which the production and consumption of literature are almost necessarily based. One is likely to forget this important fact because the New England writers had little to say of the industrial régime that had sprung up all around them. The Romantic literary attitude was still well expressed in William Cowper's line: "God made the country and man made the town."

Boston was wealthy, and yet, Dickens assures us, its devotion to the dollar was less than that of other American cities. There is an abundance of testimony to the extraordinary regard in which men of letters were held in Boston and Cambridge. Samuel G. Goodrich, who published the "Peter Parley" textbooks, wrote: "Society was strongly impressed with literary tastes; genius was respected and cherished: a man, in those days, who had achieved a literary fame, was at least equal to a president of a bank, or a treasurer of a manufacturing company." After moving from New York to Boston, Thomas Bailey Aldrich wrote back to Bayard Taylor: "The humblest man of letters here has a position which he doesn't have in New York. To be known as an able writer is to have the choicest society opened to you. A knight of the quill here is supposed necessarily a gentleman. In New York—he's a Bohemian! Outside of his personal friends he has no standing." Another outsider, William Dean Howells, writes: "I arrived in Boston when all talents had more or less a literary coloring, and when the great talents were literary." Howells adds: "Literature in Boston, indeed, was so respectable, and often of so high a lineage, that to be a poet was not only to be good society, but almost to be good family." And Boston was quite as aristocratic as Philadelphia or perhaps even Charleston. The author of "The Man Without a Country," Edward Everett Hale, in his *James Russell Lowell and His Friends* contrasts modern college students with those whom he and Lowell had known at Harvard: "Let it be remembered, then, that the whole drift of fashion, occupation, and habit among the undergraduates ran in lines suggested by literature. Athletics and sociology are, I suppose, now the fashion at Cambridge. But literature was the fashion then." It is small wonder that poets came out of such an atmosphere. In Massachusetts even the politicians were often literary—notably Daniel Webster, John Quincy Adams, Edward Everett, George Bancroft, and Charles Sumner. In other sections comparatively few of the ablest young men were attracted to literature as a career.

Boston publishers had a keen interest in the literary quality of their wares. James T. Fields was one of the most remarkable publishers the world has ever seen. He was a writer, a literary patron, an editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, and a friend of important authors on two continents. His second wife, Mrs. Annie Fields, was also a writer. Out of her journals and letters M. A. DeWolfe Howe has compiled a book—*Memories of a Hostess*—which contains vivid glimpses of most of the New England writers. It was her husband that persuaded Hawthorne to expand a tale into *The Scarlet Letter* and so converted a writer of short stories into a fairly popular novelist. Of the publishing house of Ticknor and Fields, Howells remarks with a touch of exaggeration: "Ticknor and Fields . . . were literary publishers in a sense such as the business world has known nowhere else before or since. Their imprint was a warrant of quality to the reader, and of immortality to the author." Thomas Bailey Aldrich, himself in later years an editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, tells the story that as an unknown young poet he went to Fields's office to submit a poem intended for that magazine. Fields

was out, and Aldrich waited in the editor's office until he was tired. Then he glanced at a memorandum book lying open on Fields's desk and noticed such entries as these: "Don't forget to mail E——his contract," "Don't forget H——'s proofs," etc. Below this long list of "don't forgets" Aldrich wrote: "Don't forget to accept A——'s poem," and then left. Fields, one likes to remember, accepted the poem, sent the young poet a check for it, and never published it.

In size and population Cambridge and Concord were only villages. Even Boston would not now be reckoned a large city. It was of course a provincial place—what American city of those days was not? Holmes wrote in *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* the often misquoted passage: "Boston State-house is the Hub of the Solar System. You couldn't pry that out of a Boston man if you had the tire of all creation straightened out for a crowbar." There were, it has frequently been said, only eastern windows in the houses of the Boston Brahmins. Boston cared little for what was written south or west of New York; and of New York Lowell wrote in 1857: "I said something about this city being like Paris—or rather *not* like it. I have got the phrase I wanted now—it is *plaster* of Paris—a bad cast of a Bernini original."

There was, however, a redeeming side to Boston's provincialism, for had Boston been like other American cities American literature would have been less rich than it is. In Boston conservative business men were often hostile to the antislavery movement and Transcendentalism, but the city was more hospitable to ideas than other cities. "There was not an 'ism' but had its shrine, nor a cause but had its prophet," says Edward Everett Hale; and, again: "I despair of making any person appreciate the ferment in which any young person moved who came into the daily life of Boston in the days when Lowell left college. I have tried more than once, and without the slightest success." "Boston is not quite a mean place," Emerson wrote in his journal on October 26, 1842, "since in walking yesterday in the street I met George Bancroft, Horace Greenough, Sampson Reed, Sam Ward, Theodore Parker, George Bradford."

Until after the middle of the century New England, like Virginia and South Carolina, had the sentiments of a separate nation. It was hardly more an integral part of the nation than the South had been before 1830. "When I was beginning life," wrote Lowell after the Civil War, "we had no national unity, and the only kind of unity we had was in New England but it was a provincial kind." In *Old Cambridge* Lowell's friend, Colonel T. W. Higginson, wrote: "The reader of to-day forgets that in the same years in which South Carolina was defying the North, Massachusetts gave directions that the national flag should not float over her State House." And when the Southern states began to secede from the Union, Hawthorne wrote that New England was as large a lump of earth as he could cherish an affection for.

Concord and Cambridge were not untypical of the New England villages where Emerson lectured and where lived many readers of the *Atlantic Monthly* and the *North American Review*. In the chapter on Lowell in *The Cambridge History of American Literature*, the late Ashley H. Thorndike wrote:

" . . . full justice has scarcely been done to the individuality and distinction of the New England village of the mid-nineteenth century. Cambridge was one of the best representatives of the type but there were many of them. Each was likely to have a college, or at least an academy, one orthodox and one Unitarian church, a few pleasant colonial houses, and many elms. Everybody who lived in the village had been born there, was proud of that accident, loved whatever

natural beauty its trees and meadows afforded, and enjoyed a conscious satisfaction that it was not like other places. Among the residents there might be a great personage, or even a poet, and there were certain to be enough teachers, ministers, doctors, judges, and writers to make up a coterie where ideas circulated. During the long winters, in fact, every one did considerable reading and thinking."

What distinguished Cambridge from other villages was that it was the seat of Harvard College, where Longfellow, Holmes, and Lowell taught for many years. Cambridge, says Colonel Higginson, was "like other college towns in America, . . . a place of simple habits, where wealth counted for little and intellect for a great deal." Many of its residents had been educated at Harvard, traveled in Europe, and written books. Growing up in literary families, children took to writing with perfect naturalness because their parents and friends were also writing. In 1900 Howells, then living in New York, wrote of Cambridge: "I do not believe that since the capitalistic era began there was ever a community in which money counted for less. . . . A mind cultivated in some sort was essential. . . . To my mind, the structure of society was almost ideal." Howells, however, was idealizing the home of his earlier years. While living in Cambridge, he had written to Henry James on June 26, 1869: "I should think there was less intellectual vulgarity here—the worst sort, by the way—than anywhere else in the world. And yet it's a hard place to live in, expensive, inconvenient, and at times quite desolate."

It is well, when possible, to see things American from the point of view of an intelligent European; and fortunately there are some brief glimpses of Boston, Cambridge, and Concord in the *Prose Remains* of the English poet, Arthur Hugh Clough, who spent nearly a year in New England in 1852-1853. Longfellow wrote of Clough: "I like him exceedingly; with his gentleness, and his bewildered look, and his half-closed eyes." "I like Boston," wrote Clough. And of Cambridge he noted: "People don't the least despise one for being poor in Cambridge, . . . No sort of real superiority of breeding or anything attaches as it does in England to the rich." The Cambridge streets, however, he complained, were nothing but country roads. Here is his impression of Concord, which he saw in November, 1852:

" . . . Concord is very bare (so is the country in general), it is a sort of village, almost entirely of wood houses, painted white, with Venetian blinds, green outside, with two white wooden churches—one with a stone façade of Doric columns . . .

"There are some American elms, of a weeping kind, and sycamores, *i.e.*, planes; but the wood is mostly pine—white pine and yellow pine—somewhat scrubby, occupying the tops of the low banks, and marshy hay land between, very brown now. A little brook runs through to the Concord river."

Lowell's "Cambridge Thirty Years Ago" (1854) gives a charming sketch of that village as he had known it in his boyhood. "Everybody," he says, "knew everybody, and all about everybody." He continues: "We called it 'the Village' then . . . and it was essentially an English village, quiet, unspeculative, without enterprise, sufficing unto itself and only showing such differences from the original type as the public school and the system of town government might superinduce. . . . If memory does not deceive me women still washed clothes in the town spring, clear as that of Bandusia. One coach sufficed for all the travel to the metropolis [Boston]."

In the social sense Boston was not democratic—except by comparison with cities of the Old World. If we disregard Whittier and Thoreau, the important New England writers belonged to old and established families. "Boston's aristocracy," said Charles Follen, who taught German at Harvard, "is chiefly of talent, wealth, moral habits, good manners and courtesy." One notes in Lowell, Emerson, and especially Holmes a certain patrician bias. Note Holmes's discussion of the self-made man in *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, and see also Chapter I of his *Elsie Venner*, "The Brahmin Caste of New England." Literature was still felt to be largely a matter belonging to the cultivated classes. One feels a marked difference as one passes from the New England writers to Walt Whitman and Mark Twain—two writers for whom cultivated Boston did not greatly care. Nor did Boston react favorably to Poe, who was regarded as a Bohemian and who referred to Boston as "the Frogpond."

It is to be remembered that three of the Cambridge poets were also teachers at Harvard: Longfellow, Holmes, and Lowell. They, like most other New England writers, often lectured on literary subjects. In those days the lecture lyceum was an important institution. Emerson and Lowell lectured as far west as Wisconsin, and Margaret Fuller gave erudite "conversations" to Boston women. Eager listeners to these lectures were many intelligent, well-read women—Theodore Parker's "glorious phalanx of old maids." Much of the prose of the New England writers was reworked from lectures to lyceum or college audiences. It is no wonder if some of it has for the modern reader an academic flavor.

Those who find it difficult to realize that Longfellow, Lowell, and Holmes were human beings very like ourselves may be interested in Colonel T. W. Higginson's account—in his *Cheerful Yesterdays*—of a dinner given by the publishers of the *Atlantic Monthly* to its contributors:

"During the first year of the magazine under Phillips & Sampson's management, there were monthly dinners, in or near Boston, under the generalship of Francis H. Underwood, the office editor, and John C. Wyman, then his assistant. The most notable of these gatherings was undoubtedly that held at the Revere House, on occasion of Mrs. Stowe's projected departure for Europe. It was the only one to which ladies were invited, and the invitation was accepted with a good deal of hesitation by Mrs. Stowe, and with a distinct guarantee that no wine should be furnished for the guests. Other feminine contributors were invited, but for various reasons no ladies appeared except Mrs. Stowe and Miss Harriet Prescott (now Mrs. Spofford), who had already won fame by a story called 'In a Cellar,' the scene of which was laid in Paris, and which was so thoroughly French in all its appointments that it was suspected of being a translation from that language, although much inquiry failed to reveal the supposed original. It may be well to add that the honest young author had so little appreciation of the high compliment thus paid her that she indignantly proposed to withdraw her manuscript in consequence. These two ladies arrived promptly, and the gentlemen were kept waiting, not greatly to their minds, in the hope that other fair contributors would appear. When at last it was decided to proceed without further delay, Dr. Holmes and I were detailed to escort the ladies to the dining-room: he as the head of the party, and I as the only one who knew the younger lady. As we went upstairs the vivacious Autocrat said to me, 'Can I venture it? Do you suppose that Mrs. Stowe disapproves of me very much?'—he being then subject to severe criticism from the more conservative theologians. The lady was gracious, however, and seemed glad to be

rescued at last from her wearisome waiting. She came downstairs wearing a green wreath, of which Longfellow says in his diary (July 9, 1859) that he 'thought it very becoming.'

"We seated ourselves at table, Mrs. Stowe at Lowell's right, and Miss Prescott at Holmes's, I next to her, Edmund Quincy next to me. Dr. Stowe was at Holmes's left, Whittier at his; and Longfellow, Underwood, John Wyman, and others were present. I said at once to Miss Prescott, 'This is a new edition of 'Evelina, or a Young Lady's Entrance into the World.' Begin at the beginning. what did you and Mrs. Stowe talk about for three quarters of an hour?' She answered demurely, 'Nothing, except that she once asked me what o'clock it was, and I told her I didn't know.' There could hardly be a better illustration of the curious mixture of *mauvaise honte* and indifference which often marred the outward manners of that remarkable woman. It is very likely that she had not been introduced to her companion, and perhaps had never heard her name; but imagine any kindly or gracious person of middle age making no effort to relieve the shyness of a young girl stranded with herself during three quarters of an hour of enforced seclusion!

"The modest entertainment proceeded; conversation set in, but there was a visible awkwardness, partly from the presence of two ladies, one of whom was rather silent by reason of youth, and the other by temperament; and moreover, the thawing influence of wine was wanting. There were probably no men of the party, except Whittier and myself, who did not habitually drink it, and various little jokes began to circle *sotto voce* at the table; a suggestion, for instance, from Longfellow, that Miss Prescott might be asked to send down into her Cellar for the wine she had described so well, since Mrs. Stowe would allow none above stairs. Soon, however, a change came over the aspect of affairs. My neighbor on the right, Edmund Quincy, called a waiter mysteriously, and giving him his glass of water remained tranquilly while it was being replenished. It came back suffused with a rosy hue. Some one else followed his example, and presently the 'conscious water' was blushing at various points around the board, although I doubt whether Holmes, with water-drinkers two deep on each side of him, got really his share of the coveted beverage. If he had, it might have modified the course of his talk, for I remember that he devoted himself largely to demonstrating to Dr. Stowe that all swearing doubtless originated in the free use made by the pulpit of sacred words and phrases; while Lowell, at the other end of the table, was maintaining for Mrs. Stowe's benefit that 'Tom Jones' was the best novel ever written. This line of discussion may have been lively, but was not marked by eminent tact; and Whittier, indeed, told me afterwards that Dr. and Mrs. Stowe agreed in saying to him that, while the company at the club was no doubt distinguished, the conversation was not quite what they had been led to expect. Yet Dr. Stowe was of a kindly nature and perhaps was not seriously disturbed even when Holmes assured him that there were in Boston whole families not perceptibly affected by Adam's fall; as, for instance, the family of Ware.' "*"

VII

In September, 1836, while Harvard College was celebrating the two hundredth anniversary of its founding, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Amos Bronson Alcott, Convers Francis, James

* Reprinted from Thomas Wentworth Higginson, *Cheerful Yesterdays*, by permission of Mrs. Mary Thacher Higginson.

Freeman Clarke, Frederic Henry Hedge, and George Ripley met at Ripley's house to discuss "the state of current opinion in theology and philosophy," which they agreed was thoroughly unsatisfactory. This was the beginning of the Transcendental Club, which met informally for several years. Hedge was the only one of the group who then had any firsthand acquaintance with German Transcendental philosophy. "What we strongly felt," he wrote many years later, "was dissatisfaction with the reigning sensuous philosophy, dating from Locke, on which our Unitarian theology was based." The writings of Coleridge and Carlyle—through whom Americans became acquainted with German philosophy and literature—had, he wrote, "created a ferment in the minds of some of the young clergy of that day. There was a promise in the air of a new era of intellectual life." The movement was primarily religious and philosophical rather than literary although for us today its chief importance lies in its influence upon the writings of Emerson and Thoreau. It flourished only where Unitarianism had prepared the way. Non-Unitarians rarely had any comprehension of what it was all about.

Among those who at one time or another attended meetings of the Transcendental Club were Dr. William Ellery Channing, the great Unitarian divine; his nephew and biographer, William Henry Channing; Orestes Brownson, who eventually became a Roman Catholic; Theodore Parker, the great preacher of Transcendental doctrines; Margaret Fuller; John Sullivan Dwight; Ephraim Peabody; W. H. Furness; Charles T. Follen; Christopher Pearse Cranch, Elizabeth Peabody and her sister Sophia, who married Nathaniel Hawthorne. Thoreau, Jones Very, and Hawthorne attended occasionally. A younger group of Transcendentalists included Thomas Wentworth Higginson, the friend of Emily Dickinson; Samuel Longfellow, younger brother and biographer of the poet; Moncure Daniel Conway, a Virginian; and O. B. Frothingham, who lived to write *Transcendentalism in New England* (1876). The *Dial* (1840-1844), edited first by Margaret Fuller and later by Emerson, was in a sense a Transcendental organ; and the Brook Farm was an attempt to put Transcendental ideas into practice.

The majority of New England writers were not Transcendentalists. Most of them came to admire Emerson, but Longfellow, Holmes, Lowell, Parkman, and Whittier were not members of the group and did not always view its activities sympathetically. On the other hand, it should be remembered that something akin to Transcendentalism is to be found in the writings of Poe, Melville, and Whitman, none of whom belonged to the New England group. Poe was definitely hostile, and Melville had little enthusiasm even for Emerson. Whitman once publicly acknowledged Emerson as his master, but his Transcendentalism is not derived exclusively from the New England writer.

The spirit of a movement is likely to escape when the historian tries to imprison it in a formula. We shall try here to suggest what the movement meant to the Transcendentalists and to their contemporaries. The general background is suggested by the opening paragraph in Lowell's essay, "Thoreau" (1865):

"What contemporary . . . will ever forget what was somewhat vaguely called the 'Transcendental Movement' of thirty years ago? Apparently set astir by Carlyle's essays on the Signs of the Times, and on History, the final and more immediate impulse seemed to be given by *Sartor Resartus*. At least the republication in Boston of that wonderful Abraham à Sancta Clara sermon on Falstaff's text of the miserable forked radish gave the signal for a sudden mental and moral

mutiny. *Ecce nunc tempus acceptabile*' was shouted on all hands with every variety of emphasis, and by voices of every conceivable pitch, representing the three sexes of men, women, and Mary Wortley Montagues. The nameless eagle of the tree Ygdrasil was about to sit at last, and wild-eyed enthusiasts rushed from all sides, each eager to thrust under the mystic bird that chalk egg from which the new and fairer Creation was to be hatched in due time. *Redeunt Saturnia regna*,—so far was certain, though in what shape, or by what methods, was still a matter of debate. Every possible form of intellectual and physical dyspepsia brought forth its gospel. Bran had its prophets, and the pre-sartorial simplicity of Adam its martyrs, tailored impromptu from the tar-pot by incensed neighbors, and sent forth to illustrate the 'feathered Mercury,' as defined by Webster and Worcester. Plainness of speech was carried to a pitch that would have taken away the breath of George Fox; and even swearing had its evangelists, who answered a simple inquiry after their health with an elaborate ingenuity of imprecation that might have been honorably mentioned by Marlborough in general orders. Everybody had a mission (with a capital M) to attend to everybody else's business. No brain but had its private maggot, which must have found pitifully short commons sometimes. Not a few impecunious zealots abjured the use of money (unless earned by other people), professing to live on the internal revenues of the spirit. Some had an assurance of instant millennium so soon as hooks and eyes should be substituted for buttons. Communities were established where everything was to be common but common sense. Men renounced their old gods, and hesitated only whether to bestow their furloughed allegiance on Thor or Budh. Conventions were held for every hitherto inconceivable purpose. The belated gift of tongues, as among the Fifth Monarchy men, spread like a contagion, rendering its victims incomprehensible to all Christian men; whether equally so to the most distant possible heathen or not was unexperimented, though many would have subscribed liberally that a fair trial might be made. It was the pentecost of Shinar Many foreign revolutionists out of work added to the general misunderstanding their contribution of broken English in every most ingenious form of fracture. All stood ready at a moment's notice to reform everything but themselves

"Nature is always kind enough to give even her clouds a humorous lining. I have barely hinted at the comic side of the affair, for the material was endless. This was the whistle and trailing fuse of the shell, but there was a very solid and serious kernel, full of the most deadly explosiveness. . . ."

The lunatic fringe of Transcendentalism seems to have amused Lowell; the conservative Hawthorne was bored by it. Of the many visitors who came to Concord to see Emerson he wrote: "Never was a poor little country village infested with such a variety of queer, strangely-dressed, oddly-behaved mortals, most of whom took upon themselves to be important agents of the world's destiny, yet were simply bores of a very intense water." In "The Celestial Railroad" Hawthorne included a brief satiric passage which must have pleased the orthodox in inland New England. In this modernization of *The Pilgrim's Progress* he substituted for Christian's old antagonists, Pope and Pagan, a new enemy:

"These vile old troglodytes are no longer there [in the Valley of the Shadow of Death]; but into their deserted cave another terrible giant has thrust himself, and makes it his business to seize upon honest travellers and fatten them for his table with plentiful meals of smoke, mist, moonshine, raw potatoes, and sawdust. He is a German by birth, and is called Giant Transcendentalist; but as to his

form, his features, his substance, and his nature generally, it is the chief peculiarity of this huge miscreant that neither he for himself, nor anybody for him, has ever been able to describe them. As we rushed by the cavern's mouth we caught a hasty glimpse of him, looking somewhat like an ill-proportioned figure, but considerably more like a heap of fog and duskiness. He shouted after us, but in so strange a phraseology that we knew not what he meant, nor whether to be encouraged or affrighted."

When Charles Dickens inquired in Boston the meaning of Transcendentalism, he was told that "whatever was unintelligible would be certainly transcendental." Even Horace Mann the educator, who married Mary Peabody, whose two sisters were Transcendentalists, once replied to a lady who asked him how he liked Emerson: "Madam, a Scotch mist is perfect sunshine to him." If the language of the Transcendentalists offered difficulties to their contemporaries, it is even more likely to trouble the modern reader. In particular, one needs to bear in mind the distinction which the Transcendentalists, in common with Coleridge, Carlyle and the German philosophers, made between the Reason and the Understanding. "Reason," Emerson wrote to his brother Edward on May 31, 1834, "is the highest faculty of the soul, what we often mean by the soul itself: it never *reasons*, never proves; it simply perceives, it is vision. The Understanding toils all the time, compares, contrives, adds, argues; near-sighted but strong-sighted, dwelling in the present, the expedient, the customary." Reason suggests the mystic's insight or intuition, the Quaker's Inner Light; Understanding, the ability to deal with practical affairs on a lower plane. The Idealist relies on Reason; the Materialist, on the Understanding.

It is time to turn to more sympathetic interpreters of Transcendentalism than Lowell and Hawthorne. In February, 1840, young Christopher Pearse Cranch, later a well-known poet and painter, then a student of theology at Harvard, wrote to a friend: "Emerson is to me the master mind of New England." He added: "New England is the place of places for all sorts of views. Things new and old are brought to light, and have their advocates and believers, and deniers. . . . In fact this Boston is a very Athens." On July 11 of the same year he wrote to his father, who had heard rumors that young Cranch was being led astray by German speculative thought. The son wrote that he knew little about the philosophy of Kant, Fichte, Hegel, and Schelling which had struck him as "a cold, barren system of Idealism, not calculated to strengthen the soul's faith in the external realities of the spiritual world, or enable it as a perfect philosophy should, to give a reason for the hope that is in us. . . ." He thought more highly of the French eclectic philosopher, Victor Cousin, who, he said, "expressly contends for a religious element in the soul; a faculty breathed into us by God himself, whereby we become surer of the existence of such great truths than of anything else." Cranch continued:

"But somehow the name 'Transcendentalist' has become a nickname here for all who have broken away from the material philosophy of Locke, and the old theology of many of the early Unitarians, and who yearn for something more satisfying to the soul. It has become almost a synonym for one who, in whatever way, preaches the spirit rather than the letter.

"The name has been more particularly applied to Mr. Emerson, or those who believe in or sympathize with him. Mr. Emerson has been said to have imported his doctrine from Germany. But the fact is, that no man stands more independ-

ently of other minds than he does. He seems to me very far from Kant or Fichte. His writings breathe the very spirit of religion and faith. Whatever his speculations may be, there is nothing in anything he says, which is inconsistent with Christianity. . . .

"It is convenient to have a name which may cover all those who contend for perfect freedom, who look for progress in philosophy and theology, and who sympathize with each other in the hope that the future will not always be as the past. The name 'Transcendentalist' seems to be thus fixed upon all who profess to be on the movement side, however they may differ among themselves. But union in sympathy differs from union in belief. Since we cannot avoid names, I prefer the term 'New School' to the other long name. This could comprehend all free seekers after truth, however their opinions differ."

In "The Transcendentalist," a lecture given in Boston in January, 1842, Emerson commented on the origin of the word:

"It is well known to most of my audience that the Idealism of the present day acquired the name of Transcendental from the use of that term by Immanuel Kant, of Konigsberg, who replied to the skeptical philosophy of Locke, which insisted that there was nothing in the intellect which was not previously in the experience of the senses, by showing that there was a very important class of ideas or imperative forms, which did not come by experience, but through which experience was acquired; that there were intuitions of the mind itself; and he denominated them *Transcendental* forms. The extraordinary profoundness and precision of that man's thinking have given vogue to his nomenclature, in Europe and America, to that extent that whatever belongs to the class of intuitive thought is popularly called at the present day *Transcendental*."

George Ripley, who gave up his church in Boston to found Brook Farm, wrote in a letter to his congregation, October 1, 1840:

"There is a class of persons who desire a reform in the prevailing philosophy of the day. These are called Transcendentalists, because they believe in an order of truths which transcends the sphere of the external senses. Their leading idea is the supremacy of mind over matter. Hence they maintain that the truth of religion does not depend on tradition, nor historical facts, but has an unerring witness in the soul. There is a light, they believe, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world; there is a faculty in all—the most degraded, the most ignorant, the most obscure—to perceive spiritual truth when distinctly presented; and the ultimate appeal on all moral questions is not to a jury of scholars, a hierarchy of divines, or the prescriptions of a creed, but to the common sense of the human race."

William Henry Channing, to whom Emerson inscribed his famous ode, collaborated with Emerson and James Freeman Clarke in the *Memoirs* (1852) of Margaret Fuller, in which Channing thus explained the rise of Transcendentalism:

"The summer of 1839 saw the full dawn of the Transcendental movement in New England. The rise of this enthusiasm was as mysterious as that of any form of revival; and only they who were of the faith could comprehend how bright was this morning-time of a new hope. Transcendentalism was an assertion of the

inalienable integrity of man, of the immanence of Divinity in instinct. In part, it was a reaction against Puritan orthodoxy; in part, an effect of renewed study of the ancients, or Oriental Pantheists, of Plato and the Alexandrians, of Plutarch's *Morals*, Seneca and Epictetus; in part, the natural product of the culture of the place and time. On the somewhat stunted stock of Unitarianism,—whose characteristic dogma was trust in individual reason as correlative to Supreme Wisdom,—had been grafted German Idealism, as taught by masters of most various schools,—by Kant and Jacobi, Fichte and Novalis, Schelling and Hegel, Schleiermacher and De Wette, by Madame de Stael, Cousin, Coleridge, and Carlyle; and the result was a vague yet exalting conception of the godlike nature of the human spirit. Transcendentalism, as viewed by its disciples, was a pilgrimage from the idolatrous world of creeds and rituals to the temple of the Living God in the soul. It was the putting to silence of tradition and formulas, that the Sacred Oracle might be heard through intuitions of the single-eyed and pure-hearted. Amidst materialists, zealots, and sceptics, the Transcendentalist believed in perpetual inspiration, the miraculous power of will, and a birthright to universal good . . . His maxims were,—“Trust, dare and be; infinite good is ready for your asking; seek and find. All that your fellows can claim or need is that you should become, in fact, your highest self, fulfil, then, your ideal.” Hence, among the strong, withdrawal to private study and contemplation, that they might be ‘alone with the Alone’; solemn yet glad devotedness to the Divine leadings in the inmost will; calm concentration of thought to wait for and receive wisdom; dignified independence, stern yet sweet, of fashion and public opinion; honest originality of speech and conduct, exempt alike from apology or dictation, from servility or scorn. Hence, too, among the weak, whimsies, affectation, rude disregard of proprieties, slothful neglect of common duties, surrender to the claims of natural appetite, self-indulgence, self-absorption, and self-idolatry.

“By their very posture of mind, as seekers of the new, the Transcendentalists were critics and ‘come-outers’ from the old. Neither the church, the state, the college, society, nor even reform associations, had a hold upon their hearts. The past might be well enough for those who, without make-belief, could yet put faith in common dogmas and usages; but for them the matin-bells of a new day were chiming, and the herald-trump of freedom was heard upon the mountains.”

The difficulty of formulating a really exact definition of Transcendentalism is, as Professor Clarence Gohdes points out, “inherent in the very nature of the subject. Religion, philosophy, and, to a less extent, sociology and literature are all involved. Moreover, like every phase of idealistic philosophy in the nineteenth century, it was eclectic.” “Its fundamental principle” he finds to be “a belief in the infallibility of intuition.” Professor Harold Clark Goddard's summary in *The Cambridge History of American Literature* provides as good a formulation as can be found:

“New England Transcendentalism was a late and local manifestation of that great movement for the liberation of humanity which, invading practically every sphere of civilized activity, swept over Europe at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. . . .

“According to this view of the world, the one reality is the vast spiritual background of existence, the Over-Soul, God, within which all other being is unified and from which it derives its life. Because of this indwelling of divinity, every

part of the world, however small, is a microcosm, comprehending within itself, like Tennyson's flower in the crannied wall, all the laws and meaning of the whole. The soul of each individual, therefore, is identical with the soul of the world, and contains, latently, all that that larger soul contains. . . .

"From these central conceptions all the other teachings of the transcendentalists are derived: their doctrines of self-reliance and individualism, of the identity of moral and physical laws, of the essential unity of all religions, of the negative nature of evil, their spirit of complete tolerance and of absolute optimism; their defiance of tradition and disregard for all external authority."

For the modern reader Transcendentalism means primarily Emerson; but for Emerson's contemporaries, certainly before 1850, he by no means stood out as he does for us. Transcendentalist ideas were the common property of the group, and he is better remembered than others because he was a profounder thinker and a greater writer than any of them with the possible exception of Thoreau. Emerson, who disliked to be labeled with the name of a party or a sect, wrote to his mother on March 28, 1840, from Providence, where he was lecturing:

"You must know I am reckoned here a Transcendentalist, and what that beast is, all persons in Providence have a great appetite to know: So I am carried duly about from house to house, and all the young persons ask me, when the Lecture is coming upon the Great Subject? In vain I disclaim all knowledge of that sect of Lidian's [Mrs. Emerson's],—it is still expected I shall break out with the New Light in the next discourse. I have read here my essay on the Age, the one on Homer, one on Love, & one on Politics,—These seem all to be regarded as mere screens & subterfuges while this dread Transcendentalism is still kept back. They have various definitions of the word current here. One man, of whom I have been told, in good earnest defined it as 'Operations on the Teeth'; A young man named Rodman, answered an inquiry by saying 'It was a nickname which those who stayed behind, gave to those who went ahead.' Meantime, all the people come to Lecture, and I am told the Lyceum makes money by me."

Emerson could even laugh at the vagaries of reformers much as Lowell did. (See his lecture, "New England Reformers," 1844.) He wrote in his journal on one occasion: "Transcendentalism means, says our accomplished Mrs. B., with a wave of her hand, a *little* beyond," and on another: "The view taken of Transcendentalism in State Street is that it threatens to invalidate contracts." His fullest discussion of the subject appears in his Boston lecture, January, 1842, on "The Transcendentalist." He began by saying: "The first thing we have to say respecting what are called *new views* here in New England, at the present time, is, that they are not new, but the very oldest of thoughts cast into the mould of these new times." "What is popularly called Transcendentalism among us," he went on to say, "is Idealism; Idealism as it appears in 1842." He then proceeded to distinguish the Materialists, relying on experience and "beginning to think from the data of the senses," from the Idealists, relying on consciousness and perceiving that "the senses are not final." He suggested that Transcendentalism is "the Saturnalia or excess of Faith; the presentiment of a faith proper to man in his integrity, excessive only when his imperfect obedience hinders the satisfaction of his wish."

"Although, as we have said, there is no pure Transcendentalist, yet the tendency to respect the intuitions and to give them, at least in our creed, all authority over our experience, has deeply colored the conversation and poetry of the

present day; and the history of genius and of religion in these times, though impure, and as yet not incarnated in any powerful individual, will be the history of this tendency."

In the final beautiful paragraph of "The Transcendentalist" Emerson suggested that the solitary thoughts of the Transcendental thinker, trusting to Reason, might outlast the achievements of extraverts relying upon the Understanding:

"Amidst the downward tendency and proneness of things, when every voice is raised for a new road or another statute or a subscription of stock; for an improvement in dress, or in dentistry; for a new house or a larger business; for a political party, or the division of an estate—will you not tolerate one or two solitary voices in the land, speaking for thoughts and principles not marketable or perishable? Soon these improvements and mechanical inventions will be superseded, these modes of living lost out of memory; these cities rotted, ruined by war, by new inventions, by new seats of trade, or the geologic changes:—all gone, like the shells which sprinkle the sea-beach with a white colony to-day, forever renewed to be forever destroyed. But the thoughts which these few hermits strove to proclaim by silence as well as by speech, not only by what they did, but by what they forbore to do, shall abide in beauty and strength, to reorganize themselves in nature, to invest themselves anew in other, perhaps higher endowed and happier mixed clay than ours, in fuller union with the surrounding system."

VIII

For the New Englander, the literary horizon extended to Europe and occasionally even to the Orient, but in his own country it ended not far to the south and west of the Hudson River. Writers of the South and the Middle West—perhaps no less provincial—complained that the New Englanders, like the Greeks, praised only their own books and ignored those of the "barbarians" outside. A Philadelphia poet, George Henry Boker, wrote to a Southern poet, Paul Hamilton Hayne, on April 15, 1867: "Who wrote that kindly notice of me in a Charleston newspaper? Was it you, old true-penny? . . . for it was so widely copied in our papers that it made the Yankees furious. According to the Yankee creed, Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes, Emerson and Whittier are the only poets in America, and also the only poets that New England will permit to exist." One must not imagine, however, that the New England authors were any more of a mutual admiration society than those in Charleston or Philadelphia.

One must be on his guard against provincialism even in our literary historians. Present-day New England students of American literature are as free from provincialism as any of their contemporaries, but their predecessors were not. In an address on "The Course of American History," Woodrow Wilson warned against the provincial bias of our political historians:

"Our national history has been written for the most part by New England men. All honor to them! . . . They have written our history, nevertheless, from but a single point of view. From where they sit, the whole of the great development looks like an Expansion of New England. Other elements but play along the sides of the great process by which the Puritan has worked out the development of the nation and policy. . . . To the Southern writer, too, the story looks much the same. . . . It is the history of the Suppression of the South."

This provincialism mars one of the best-written of our literary studies, Barrett Wendell's *A Literary History of America* (1900), of which Fred Lewis Pattee—himself reared and educated in New England—remarks that it “should have been entitled ‘A Literary History of Harvard University, with Incidental Glimpses of the Minor Writers of America.’” Wendell's provincial bias is evident from the following passage taken from an address on American literature given at Vassar College in 1893: “Nor can I feel that we have erred, while considering American literature, in attending chiefly to that New England which to me is the spot on earth where life means most. In America, I believe, only New England has expressed itself in a literary form which inevitably commands attention from whoever pursues such inquiries as ours.” Of Poe, Wendell remarks: “Poe, to be sure, is fantastic and meretricious throughout.” By 1909, however, when he delivered an address at the University of Virginia at the Poe centenary, Wendell had modified his position. “The literature of New England,” he said, “. . . is first of all, not American or national, but local.”

The present-day critic often takes an unsympathetic view of mid-nineteenth-century New England. An example appears in the opening chapter of George Santayana's *Character and Opinion in the United States* (1920):

“About the middle of the nineteenth century, in the quiet sunshine of provincial prosperity, New England had an Indian summer of the mind, and an agreeably reflective literature showed how brilliant that russet and yellow season could be. There were poets, historians, orators, preachers, most of whom had studied foreign literatures and had travelled; they demurely kept up with the times; they were universal humanists. But it was all a harvest of leaves; these worthies had an expurgated and barren conception of life; theirs was the purity of sweet old age. . . . These cultivated writers lacked native roots and fresh sap because the American intellect itself lacked them. Their culture was half a pious survival, half an intentional acquirement; it was not the inevitable flowering of a fresh experience.”

Twentieth-century literary critics have forgotten that they were not the first to point out the shortcomings of the New England writers. Poe's condemnation of Longfellow's didacticism they may remember, but they have overlooked the fact that the New England critics were not blind to the shortcomings of their contemporaries. Margaret Fuller wrote of the most popular poet of the century: “Longfellow is artificial and imitative. He borrows incessantly, and mixes what he borrows, so that it does not appear to the best advantage. He is very faulty in using broken or mixed metaphors. The ethical part of his writings has a hollow, second-hand sound.” In an essay on “Americanism in Literature,” dated 1870, Thomas Wentworth Higginson wrote of the two greatest of the New England writers: “Both looked into the realm of passion, Emerson with distrust, Hawthorne with eager interest; but neither thrilled with its spell, and the American poet of passion is yet to come. How tame and manageable are wont to be the emotions of our bards, how placid and literary their allusions!” Another New Englander, Edwin P. Whipple—after Lowell the best-known literary critic of his section and time—wrote in an essay entitled “The American mind,” dated 1857:

“Our theology is closer to the public mind . . . than our literature. . . . [In what] we call American literature and art . . . the national life is not so much their inspiration as it is the object they would inspire. Channing and Allston,

for instance, have a purified delicacy and refinement of nature, a constant reference to the universal in morals and taste, and a want of ruddy and robust strength, indicating that they have not risen genially out of the national mind. . . . Their works . . . have neither the exclusiveness nor the raciness and gusto characteristic of genius which is national. The same principle applies to our poetical literature, which worships Beauty, but not beautiful America.

" . . . our most eminent poets—Dana, Emerson, Bryant, Longfellow, Lowell—are more or less idealists, from the nature of their position. Though they may represent the woods and streams of American nature, they commonly avoid the passions and thoughts of American human nature. The 'haunt and main region of their song' is man rather than men; humanity in its simple elements, rather than complex combinations; and their mission is to stand somewhat apart from the rushing stream of American industrial life, and, assimilating new elements from other literatures, or directly from visible nature, to pour into that stream, as rills into a river, thoughtfulness, and melody, and beauty. Their productions being thus *contributions* to the national mind, rather than offsprings of it, are contemplative rather than lyrical, didactic rather than dramatic."

IX

The demand for a national literature continues throughout this period—and, indeed, down to the present time—but there was a reaction against the excessive literary nationalism of earlier writers. There was also, as we have already noted, a growing demand in the South and the West for literatures which would represent those sections. Emerson and Whitman are the ablest champions of literary Americanism. See Emerson's "The American Scholar" and Whitman's *Democratic Vistas*. The reaction against excessive nationalism is well expressed in Longfellow's *Kavanaugh*, the preface to Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun*, and Boker's "Ad Criticum." Poe, who cared little enough for Americanism in any form, wrote in the *Southern Literary Messenger* for April, 1836:

"There was a time, it is true, when we cringed to foreign opinion—let us even say when we paid a most servile deference to British critical dicta. That an American book could, by any possibility, be worthy perusal, was an idea by no means extensively prevalent in the land; and if we were induced to read at all the productions of our native writers, it was only after repeated assurances from England that such productions were not altogether contemptible. . . . [But now] We throw off, with the most presumptuous and unmeaning hauteur, *all* deference whatever to foreign opinion—we forget, in the puerile inflation of vanity, that *the world* is the true theatre of the biblical hystrio—we get up a hue and cry about the necessity of encouraging native writers of merit—we blindly fancy that we can accomplish this by indiscriminate puffing of good, bad, and indifferent, without taking the trouble to consider that what we choose to denominate encouragement is thus, by its general application, rendered precisely the reverse. In a word, so far from being ashamed of the many disgraceful literary failures to which our own inordinate vanities and misapplied patriotism have lately given birth, and so far from deeply lamenting that these daily puerilities are of home manufacture, we adhere pertinaciously to our original blindly conceived idea, and thus often find ourselves involved in the gross paradox of liking a stupid book the better, because, sure enough, its stupidity is American."

The position of the South in the literary history of this period of controversy and civil war was somewhat anomalous and has been too little understood. That region now had more and somewhat abler writers than in any preceding period, but it enjoyed no such literary renaissance as that of the New England-New York area. The greatest of all Southern writers, Poe, spent his maturest years in Philadelphia and New York. In an age marked by industrial development and reform the conservative South, now committed to the defense of slavery on principle, found itself the object of increasingly violent attacks. Southerners came more and more to feel that Northern writing did not represent their section; that it was growing rapidly more hostile to the Southern way of life. The North, it was felt, had undertaken to supply the whole country with reading matter and would accept nothing from the South in return. Hence a demand for a Southern literature, a literature which would justify the South and portray life from the Southern point of view. Only half-consciously the South was moving toward a separate nationality. The demand for a Southern literature was in some respects comparable to the widespread demand for an American literature which followed the Revolution.

South and North were developing in opposite directions, and each accused the other of departing from the genuine American tradition. The provincial Webster had developed into the champion of nationalism while Calhoun, who had been an outstanding nationalist, by 1830 had become the spokesman for a minority section. The agricultural South felt that it was in a state of economic vassalage to the industrial North. Northern bankers, merchants, and traders had monopolized the cotton market. The tariff seemed to Southerners designed merely to enrich Northern manufacturers at the expense of Southern farmers. At a meeting of the Southern Commercial Convention in New Orleans in 1855, Albert Pike, a New England-born poet who had made his home in Arkansas, said:

"From the rattle with which the nurse tickles the ear of the child born in the south to the shroud that covers the cold form of the dead, every thing comes to us from the north. We rise from between sheets made in northern looms, and pillows of northern feathers, to wash in basins made in the north, dry our beards on northern towels, and dress ourselves in garments woven in northern looms; we eat from northern plates and dishes; our rooms are swept with northern brooms, our gardens dug with northern spades, and our bread kneaded in trays or dishes of northern wood or tin; and the very wood which feeds our fires is cut with northern axes, helved with hickory brought from Connecticut and New York."

At the very time when the North was becoming more national and democratic, the South was in reaction against the spirit of the times. Irving, who was in South Carolina in 1832 at the time of the Nullification controversy, wrote: "It is really lamentable to see such a fine set of gallant fellows as these leading nullifiers are, so madly in the wrong." Their point of view was expressed by a Carolinian of a later day, Basil Lanneau Gildersleeve, who said: "I am a Charlestonian first, a South Carolinian next, and after that a Southerner."

The movement for a separate Southern nationality came too late. Even if the Confederacy could have won the war, it would not have been possible for the South to realize its ideal of economic self-sufficiency. A victorious Confederacy would have continued a debtor region to

be exploited by Northern or European bankers, merchants, and manufacturers unless it had given up its dependence upon agriculture—the very basis of the social system for which it fought.

Southerners felt with some justice that Northern writing was unfair to the South. There were complaints of Northern textbooks. One writer pointed out that a typical geography text gave “two pages to Connecticut onions and broom-corn, and ten lines to Louisiana and sugar.” Another writer wondered what improvement Southern boys and girls could “derive from reading works wherein they are constantly informed that their fathers, and ancestors generally, for the last two hundred years, have been a heartless, cruel, bloody-minded set of robbers, kid-nappers, and slave-whippers. . . .” By 1850 even the purely literary magazines of the North seemed to have become hostile to the South. In self-defense the South must produce its own literature. Abolition was an attack on one form of property which would eventually, so Southerners believed, result in socialism or communism and the destruction of all forms of private property.

If one studies what Emerson, Channing, or Lowell wrote about the South in these years, one notes a growing hostility not only to slavery but to nearly everything Southern. Emerson, who had been in the South, in 1856 contrasted South and North. “I do not see,” he said, “how a barbarous community and a civilized community can constitute one state.” The North he saw as “adorned with education, with skilful labor, with arts, with long prospective interests, with sacred family ties, with honor and justice.” In the South, which seemed to lack all these things, “life is a fever; man is an animal, given to pleasure, practising with deadly weapons to defend himself against his slaves and against companions brought up in the same idle and dangerous way.” Forgetting Rome and Athens, Northern writers came to believe that people who held slaves were necessarily semi-barbarians. In 1866 Lowell wrote of the civilization of the Old South: “There were no public libraries, no colleges worthy of the name; there was no art, no science,—still worse, no literature but Simms’s: there was no desire for them.”

In this period South and North, though they spoke the same language, ceased to understand each other. The Abolitionists had created a legend of a Southern slavocracy which had little basis in actuality. Apart from slavery, the political life of the South was as democratic as that of the North. Southern leaders in all departments now came predominantly from the large middle class and not from the small minority of wealthy planters. Edmund Quincy wrote in the *Atlantic Monthly* for December, 1857: “No antiquity hallows, no public services consecrate, no gifts of lofty culture adorn, no graces of noble breeding embellish the coarse and sordid oligarchy (the Slave States) that gives law to us. And in the blighting shadow of slavery letters die and art cannot live.” “What book,” he asked, “has the South ever given to the libraries of the world? What work of art has she ever added to its galleries?”

The attempt to create a distinctively Southern literature involved many difficulties and the results achieved are not of great importance. The South had no great commercial publishers, and books published by Southern printers did not sell. Southern readers preferred to buy Northern books and magazines. The numerous amateurs who launched Southern magazines never got adequate support from their own section. The population of the South was predominantly agricultural; and though that section had a larger proportion of college-bred men than the North, country gentlemen have never anywhere contributed greatly to literature.

AMERICAN RENAISSANCE -----1830-1870

The Southern writers of the period nearly all lived in the cities and small towns; they were not planters but teachers, lawyers, doctors, journalists, and many of them had been either born or educated in the North.

The peculiar difficulties of the Southern writer are well stated in an article, "Literature in the South," which Henry Timrod published in *Russell's Magazine* in August, 1859. No writer anywhere, he thought, had such peculiar difficulties or so limited an audience as this "Pariah of modern literature." "It is," he said, "the settled conviction of the North that genius is indigenous there, and flourishes only in a Northern atmosphere. It is equally the firm conviction of the South that genius—literary genius, at least—is an exotic that will not flower on a Southern soil." If the Southern writer published a book in the North, the South was indignant that he had not chosen a Southern publisher; but if he published his book in the South, he found more than half of the edition left on his hands. If he gave a beautiful and truthful picture of Southern life, the North would abuse him; if he published a volume of poems with no Southern local coloring, his own people would condemn him as lacking in Southern feeling. "It is, unfortunately," he said, "not in the power of a people to confer together and say, 'Come, now, let us arise, and build up a literature.' "

The South cut itself off from some of the most important literary influences of the age. Southern writers could describe the beauties of nature and write lovingly of the historic past of their section; but that large part of the Romantic Movement which involved the desire to reshape the social and economic order had little influence in the conservative South. Thus Simms, Poe, Timrod, and other writers shut themselves off from what gave most vitality to the work of Emerson, Thoreau, and Melville. The first really productive period in the South was not to come until slavery was a thing of the past.¹

The best talents of the South went into politics rather than into literature. The only notable literary center in the South was in Charleston. Southern writers were widely scattered, and they had in general little contact with one another. Their books were generally published in the North, and they often wrote for Northern magazines. In the South literary fashions lagged a little behind those of the North much as those of the North lagged behind those of the European world. Nevertheless, Poe, Simms, Kennedy, Hayne, and Timrod kept abreast of current literature even though lesser Southern writers did not. There was a good deal more literary activity in the Old South than has generally been supposed. Until recent years the literature of the ante-bellum South has received almost no scholarly study, and it is easy to misjudge its importance. (See two volumes in the American Writers Series: Edd W. Parks's *Southern Poets* and Gregory Paine's *Southern Prose*. The editor of this anthology has in preparation a history of the literature of the Old South.)

Apart from the work of Poe, Kennedy, Simms, and Timrod, the most distinctive literary contribution of the South came from the humorists. The unpretentious sketches which often first appeared in newspapers come closer to being a really Southern literature than the more literary pieces which appeared in magazines dedicated to creating a literature of the South.

In 1845 William T. Porter, editor of the *Spirit of the Times*, in which many of the best

¹ For a much fuller treatment of the subject, see Jay B. Hubbell, "Literary Nationalism in the Old South," in *American Studies in Honor of William Kenneth Boyd* (1940).

humorous narratives first appeared, published *The Big Bear of Arkansas, and Other Sketches, Illustrative of Characters and Incidents in the South and Southwest*. In his Preface he said: "A new vein of literature, as original as it is inexhaustible in its source, has been opened in this country within a very few years, with the most marked success." In the Old Southwest, he noted, the frontier had passed on but had left behind "scores of original characters to be encountered nowhere else under the sun." The title story in Porter's collection, T. B. Thorpe's "The Big Bear of Arkansas," is of the tall-tale variety, and the humor comes from exaggeration. The backwoodsman from Arkansas boasts that his state is "the creation state, the finishing-up country—a state where the *sile* runs down to the center of the 'arth, and government gives you a title to every inch of it. . . . It's a state without a fault, it is." When a Hoosier interrupts: "Excepting mosquitoes," the backwoodsman replies: "But mosquitoes is natur, and I never find fault with her, her trees ar large, her rivers ar large, her varmints ar large, and a small mosquito would be of no more use in Arkansaw than preaching in a crane-break." This type of humor figured in the David Crockett almanacs, and in later times in the tall tales of Paul Bunyan, Pecos Bill, and Mike Fink.

The South was a region where men swapped stories at courthouses, country stores, and taverns; and in Southern humorous writing the oral tradition is strong. Many of the humorous sketches published in the *Spirit of the Times* had probably been told many times before being committed to writing. The men who wrote these stories were not professional writers or backwoodsmen but lawyers, doctors, journalists, soldiers, country gentlemen, and sportsmen; and they wrote them primarily for readers on the Eastern seaboard, not in the backwoods. In the semi-frontier regions of the South and West the froth and dregs of society were often more conspicuous than the solid, unpretending men of the better sort. Here was rich material for the satiric humorist: quacks pretending to be physicians, justices of the peace setting up as lawyers, peddlers turned bankers, and so on. There was an excess of vulgarity, pretension, humbuggery; there were fools in plenty and rascals and sharpers who fleeced them. Here was a harvest for the humorist with an eye for character and the gift of telling a story; and the materials were fresh, for since the time of William Byrd no important Southern writer had treated the humors of the backwoods.

Among the best of the Southern humorists were Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, author of *Georgia Scenes* (1835); Johnson Jones Hooper, creator of Captain Simon Suggs; Joseph Glover Baldwin, author of *The Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi* (1853); George W. Harris, who described the practical jokes of Sut Lovingood, a Tennessee mountaineer; but there were many more. Among the forgotten humorists was a North Carolina newspaperman, Charles Napoleon Bonaparte Evans, who created Jesse Holmes the Fool-Killer, destined to figure much later in stories by O. Henry, George Ade, and Stephen Vincent Benét. One of the last and best was Charles Henry Smith, whose "Bill Arp" letters helped to keep up the morale of the South during the Civil War and the trying years of Reconstruction.

The Southern humorists were realistic rather than romantic, and they were comparatively free from the sentimentality and artificiality which characterized so much popular writing of the period. They were the immediate predecessors of the local colorists of the 'eighties and 'nineties. In Virginia, George W. Bagby was to influence Thomas Nelson Page; and in Georgia, Longstreet and Smith were to affect the work of Joel Chandler Harris. The tradition of

Southern and Southwestern humor culminates in the work of Mark Twain, who grew up in a slaveholding community on the banks of the Mississippi and in his apprentice days wrote for newspapers humorous sketches of the traditional type.

His friend, William Dean Howells, once went so far as to say that what we call Western humor is more properly described as Southern humor. This, however, is a considerable exaggeration. There was a humorous tradition in the North as well as in the South. In New England humorous writing of a different sort figured largely in the work of Lowell and Holmes, but New England had also its crackerbox philosophers. The earliest of these, Seba Smith, a Down-Easter from Maine, wrote the widely circulated letters of "Jack Downing." Other important Northern humorists were Henry Wheeler Shaw, who wrote under the name of "Josh Billings," and, most important of all, Charles Farrar Browne, whose "Artemus Ward" stories are perhaps the best before Mark Twain. It was for Browne that Mark Twain wrote out "The Jumping Frog" story which gave him his first taste of what he would probably have called notoriety. The humorist tradition lingers in attenuated form in the twentieth century. Will Rogers as a humorous commentator on politics worked in a tradition which goes back to Artemus Ward, Hosea Biglow, and Jack Downing.²

X

While Americans were vigorously demanding a national literature, literary influences from Europe were becoming more numerous and more complex. The steamship had brought the United States closer to Europe and made it still more difficult for an American to write without being influenced by his European contemporaries, even those who wrote in a different language. Some popular magazines were made up almost entirely of material copied from British periodicals, and books of popular British authors were quickly reprinted in this country. Among English authors who were widely read in America were Carlyle, Tennyson, Dickens, and Thackeray. "The influence of Carlyle upon American thought and letters," says F. L. Mott, "was probably greater in force, directness, and intimacy than that of any other foreign writer of his century." More widely read in America, however, were Dickens and Mrs. Hemans, who was as popular as "the sweet singer of Hartford," Mrs. Lydia Huntley Sigourney. Dickens's great reputation suffered somewhat from his unfavorable treatment of the United States in *American Notes* and *Martin Chuzzlewit*, which, according to Carlyle, caused all America to rise up like one universal soda bottle. Americans were as quick to discern the merits of Tennyson and Browning as were Englishmen. In this period British authors became increasingly conscious of America. It was apparent that a large portion of every British writer's readers were to be found in the United States. It was beginning to be profitable for the English author to give lectures or readings in this country, as both Dickens and Thackeray did. The growth of democracy in England gave the British travelers a somewhat more sympathetic attitude toward American institutions than their predecessors had had. For representative selections, see Allan

² For fuller treatment of American humor, see Walter Blair, *Native American Humor* (1937); Constance Rourke, *American Humor* (1931); Jennette Tandy, *Crackerbox Philosophers* (1925); A. P. Hudson (ed.), *Humor of the Old Deep South* (1936); and Franklin J. Meine (ed.), *Tall Tales of the Southwest* (1930).

For discussion of the question of to what extent American humor is American, see the articles by DeLancey Ferguson, Constance Rourke, and others listed in Lewis Leary (ed.), *Articles on American Literature . . .* (1947), pp. 272-273.

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Nevins's *American Social History as Recorded by British Travelers*. See also Clarence Gohdes's important study, *American Literature in Nineteenth-Century England* (1944).

With improved means of transportation, Americans visited Europe in increasing numbers. In fact, a visit to Europe was often felt to be an indispensable part of one's education. With the exception of Whittier, Thoreau, and Whitman, most of our better-known writers went to Europe. Poe spent five years of his boyhood in England. Emerson was in Europe three times. In 1832 he went abroad primarily to see four men: Landor, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Carlyle. On his second visit in 1847-1848 he lectured for several months to British audiences. Holmes spent two years in the study of medicine in Paris. Longfellow and Lowell, both teachers of modern languages at Harvard, went to Europe to prepare themselves for their work. The most indefatigable literary traveler was Bayard Taylor, the translator of *Faust* and author of *Views Afoot* and many other popular travel books. Hawthorne, Lowell, Boker, and Taylor—like Irving before them—held consular appointments. Although some of our authors were greatly attracted by Europe, none of them settled there permanently, like Henry James and Bret Harte in a later period. In biographies, travel books, etc., there is a wealth of material for one who wishes to study the American writer's reaction to Europe. Two of the most important books are Emerson's *English Traits* and Hawthorne's *Our Old Home*. Englishmen, who had always felt privileged to criticize America, did not enjoy the passages in which Emerson and Hawthorne expressed mild disapproval of certain British traits.

In his "Remarks on National Literature" (1830), William Ellery Channing maintained that American writers had formed themselves too exclusively upon British models; he wisely suggested that they acquaint themselves with other European literatures—as Irving had already done. The influence of continental literatures became an important means of freeing American literature from some of its limitations; but at first the linguistic difficulty was a great obstacle, for modern languages were then little taught in our schools. The strongest outside influence, apart from that of English literature, was the German.³ The literature of Germany, coming partly through Coleridge and Carlyle, had considerable influence upon the New England Transcendentalists. The Germans, however, were slow in developing an interest in America and American literature; but they did read the works of two authors who visited this country and wrote of the West: Karl Postl (Charles Sealsfield) and Friedrich Gerstäcker.

In spite of the traditional friendship with France, it was not easy for the average American to appreciate the merits of the French. He judged them rather by their chefs and their dancing masters than by their great writers. George Sand was introduced to America as the immoral author of immoral books. The difficulties which American readers in Victorian times had with her novels are plainly revealed in Howard Mumford Jones's article, "American Comment on George Sand, 1837-1848," *American Literature*, III, 389-407 (January, 1932). See also his *America and French Culture, 1750-1848* (1927). There were Americans, however, who had some understanding of the French. Emerson in Paris in May, 1848, wrote in his journal: "I have been exaggerating the English merits all winter, and disparaging the French. Now I am

³ See S. H. Goodnight, *German Literature in American Magazines prior to 1846* (1907); M. H. Haertel, *German Literature in American Magazines, 1846 to 1889* (1908); Lillie V. Hathaway, *German Literature of the Mid-Nineteenth Century in England and America as Reflected in the Journals, 1840-1914* (1936); James Taft Hatfield, *New Light on Longfellow* (1933); and Orie W. Long, *Literary Pioneers: Early American Explorers of European Culture* (1935).

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correcting my judgment of both, and the French have risen very fast." In September of the same year he wrote: "George Sand is a great genius, and yet owes to her birth in France her entire freedom from the cant and snuffle of our dead Christianity."

A Frenchman, Alexis de Tocqueville, was the author of *Democracy in America*—a classic like James Bryce's *The American Commonwealth* of a later day. The French were considerably interested in certain American authors, especially Cooper and Poe; but they have never greatly cared for the New England writers. Poe's conception of literature is congenial to the French, and his vogue in France has been enormous. See C. P. Cambiaire, *The Influence of Edgar Allan Poe in France* (1927). Poe began to be known in France a few years before his death in 1849. One of his earliest admirers was Charles Baudelaire, who wrote: "In 1846 or 1847 I became acquainted with a few fragments of Edgar Poe. I experienced a peculiar emotion. . . . I found,—believe me, as you will,—poems and tales of which I already had a vague, confused, and ill-ordered idea, and which Poe had known how to arrange and bring to perfection." A French critic of American literature, Philarète Chasles, wrote a book which was translated and published in New York in 1852 under the title, *Anglo-American Literature and Manners*. The modern reader is struck by the lengthy discussion of Herman Melville, whose *Moby-Dick* had appeared only the year before.

The complex subject of our cultural and literary relations with the Old World was until recent years largely neglected on both sides of the Atlantic, and it has not yet been adequately studied. We have here tried only to suggest its great extent and importance. In modern times no national literature has grown up in isolation but has always been profoundly influenced by literary tendencies affecting the whole western world. American literature is no exception. Even our literary nationalists, like Emerson and Whitman, have felt the influence of important European writers. Emerson, for example, drew from Wordsworth, Coleridge, Carlyle, Goethe, the Neo-Platonists, and even Oriental writers. He was, of course, original enough to make his own what he borrowed. In the nineteenth century the United States began to repay its vast literary debt to Europe. Two or three examples must suffice. Dickens owed something to Irving and Matthew Arnold to Emerson, and many English and continental authors have been influenced by Poe and Whitman.

JOHN PENDLETON KENNEDY

1795 - 1870

He was a man of letters rather than a lawyer, and if he had eschewed politics and law and stuck to his pen our literature would have been greatly in his debt. Few Americans of his day were so generously gifted, none possessed a lighter touch. He has been somewhat carelessly forgotten even by our literary historians who can plead no excuse for so grave a blunder.

V. L. PARRINGTON, *Main Currents in American Thought*
(1927), II, 56.

In addition to his three or four important books, Kennedy deserves remembrance for his connection with Poe and Thackeray. He was one of the judges in the Baltimore *Saturday Visitor* contest in which the winning story was Poe's "MS. Found in a Bottle." On Poe's death Kennedy wrote in his journal:

"It is many years ago, I think perhaps as early as 1833 or '34, that I found him in Baltimore in a state of starvation. I gave him clothing, free access to my table and the use of a horse for exercise whenever he chose; in fact brought him up from the very verge of despair. I then got him employment with Mr. White, in one department of the editorship of the *Southern Literary [Messenger]* at Richmond."

When Thackeray was at work on *The Virginians*, Kennedy lent him books, took him on a visit to Virginia to see plantation life for himself, and furnished notes for certain chapters of the novel.

His *Swallow Barn*, which is not a novel but a book of traveler's sketches, gives the best description to be found of the life of the Virginia planters before the Civil War. Kennedy's mother was a Virginian, and he often visited in the state. From his account it is clear that the chief charm of Virginia life lay not in its luxury or grandeur but in its homespun simplicity. Later Southern writers—particularly Thomas Nelson Page—give a much more glamorous picture. The book was first published in 1832. In his preface to the revised edition of 1851, from which our selection is taken, Kennedy says:

"Swallow Barn exhibits a picture of country life in Virginia, as it existed in the first quarter of the present century. Between that period and the present day, time and what is called 'the progress,' have made many innovations there,

as they have done every where else. The Old Dominion is losing somewhat of the raciness of her once peculiar, and—speaking in reference to the locality described in these volumes—insulated cast of manners. The mellow, bland, and sunny luxuriance of her old-time society—its good fellowship, its hearty and constitutional *companionableness*, the thriftless gayety of the people, their dogged but amiable invincibility of opinion, and that overflowing hospitality which knew no ebb,—these traits, though far from being impaired, are modified at the present day by circumstances which have been gradually attaining a marked influence over social life as well as political relation. An observer cannot fail to note that the manners of our country have been tending towards a uniformity which is visibly effacing all local differences.”

There are two biographies of Kennedy: Henry T. Tuckerman's (1871) and Edward M. Gwathmey's (1931). See also Jay B. Hubbell's edition (1929) of *Swallow Barn* and Ernest Leisy's edition (1937) of *Horse-Shoe Robinson*. For other materials, see Lewis Leary (ed.), *Articles on American Literature . . .* (1947).

from SWALLOW BARN (1832, 1851)

CHAPTER II. A COUNTRY GENTLEMAN

The master of this lordly domain is Frank Meriwether. He is now in the meridian of life—somewhere about forty-five. Good cheer and an easy temper tell well upon him. The first has given him a comfortable, portly figure, and the latter a contemplative turn of mind, which inclines him to be lazy and philosophical.

He has some right to pride himself on his personal appearance, for he has a handsome face, with a dark blue eye and a fine intellectual brow. His head is growing scant of hair on the crown, which induces him to be somewhat particular in the management of his locks in that locality, and these are assuming a decided silvery hue.

It is pleasant to see him when he is going to ride to the Court House on business occasions. He is then apt to make his appearance in a coat of blue broadcloth, astonishingly glossy, and with an unusual amount of plaited ruffle strutting through the folds of a Marseilles waistcoat. A worshipful finish is given to this costume by a large straw hat, lined with green silk. There is a magisterial fulness in his garments which betokens condition in the world, and a heavy bunch of seals, suspended by a chain of gold, jingles as he moves, pronouncing him a man of superfluities.

It is considered rather extraordinary that he

has never set up for Congress: but the truth is, he is an unambitious man, and has a great dislike to currying favor—as he calls it. And, besides, he is thoroughly convinced that there will always be men enough in Virginia willing to serve the people, and therefore does not see why he should trouble his head about it. Some years ago, however, there was really an impression that he meant to come out. By some sudden whim, he took it into his head to visit Washington during the session of Congress, and returned, after a fortnight, very seriously distempered with politics. He told curious anecdotes of certain secret intrigues which had been discovered in the affairs of the capital, gave a clear insight into the views of some deep-laid combinations, and became, all at once, painfully florid in his discourse, and dogmatical to a degree that made his wife stare. Fortunately, this orgasm soon subsided, and Frank relapsed into an indolent gentleman of the opposition; but it had the effect to give a much more decided cast to his studies, for he forthwith discarded the “Richmond Whig” from his newspaper subscription, and took to “The Enquirer,” like a man who was not to be disturbed by doubts. And as it was morally impossible to believe all that was written on both sides, to prevent his mind from being abused, he from this time forward took a stand against the re-election of Mr. Adams¹ to the Presidency, and

¹ John Quincy Adams.

resolved to give an implicit faith to all alleged facts which set against his administration. The consequence of this straight-forward and confiding deportment was an unexpected complimentary notice of him by the Executive of the State. He was put into the commission of the peace, and having thus become a public man against his will, his opinions were observed to undergo some essential changes. He now thinks that a good citizen ought neither to solicit nor decline office; that the magistracy of Virginia is the sturdiest pillar which supports the fabric of the Constitution; and that the people, "though in their opinions they may be mistaken, in their sentiments they are never wrong;"—with some such other dogmas as, a few years ago, he did not hold in very good repute. In this temper, he has of late embarked on the millpond of county affairs, and notwithstanding his amiable character and his doctrinary republicanism, I am told he keeps the peace as if he commanded a garrison, and administers justice like a Cadi.²

He has some claim to supremacy in this last department; for during three years he smoked segars in a lawyer's office in Richmond, which enabled him to obtain a bird's-eye view of Blackstone and the Revised Code. Besides this, he was a member of a Law Debating Society, which ate oysters once a week in a cellar; and he wore, in accordance with the usage of most promising law students of that city, six cravats, one over the other, and yellow-topped boots, by which he was recognized as a blood of the metropolis. Having in this way qualified himself to assert and maintain his rights, he came to his estate, upon his arrival at age, a very model of landed gentlemen. Since that time his avocations have had a certain literary tincture; for having settled himself down as a married man, and got rid of his superfluous foppery, he rambled with wonderful assiduity through a wilderness of romances, poems, and dissertations, which are now collected in his library, and, with their battered blue covers, present a lively type of an army of continentals at the close of the war, or a hospital of invalids. These have all, at last, given way to the newspapers—a miscellaneous study very attractive and engrossing to country gentlemen. This line of study has rendered Meriwether a most perilous antagonist in the matter of legislative proceedings.

² Among the Mohammedans, a cadi is a magistrate or judge of a village or town.

A landed proprietor, with a good house and a host of servants, is naturally a hospitable man. A guest is one of his daily wants. A friendly face is a necessary of life, without which the heart is apt to starve, or a luxury without which it grows parsimonious. Men who are isolated from society by distance, feel these wants by an instinct, and are grateful for the opportunity to relieve them. In Meriwether, the sentiment goes beyond this. It has, besides, something dialectic in it. His house is open to every body, as freely almost as an inn. But to see him when he has had the good fortune to pick up an intelligent, educated gentleman,—and particularly one who listens well!—a respectable, assentatious stranger!—All the better if he has been in the Legislature, or better still, if in Congress. Such a person caught within the purlieu of Swallow Barn, may set down one week's entertainment as certain—in evitable, and as many more as he likes—the more the merrier. He will know something of the quality of Meriwether's rhetoric before he is gone.

Then again, it is very pleasant to see Frank's kind and considerate bearing towards his servants and dependents. His slaves appreciate this, and hold him in most affectionate reverence, and, therefore, are not only contented, but happy under his dominion.

Meriwether is not much of a traveller. He has never been in New England, and very seldom beyond the confines of Virginia. He makes now and then a winter excursion to Richmond, which, I rather think, he considers as the centre of civilization; and towards autumn, it is his custom to journey over the mountain to the Springs, which he is obliged to do to avoid the unhealthy season in the tide-water region. But the upper country is not much to his taste, and would not be endured by him if it were not for the crowds that resort there for the same reason which operates upon him; and I may add,—though he would not confess it—for the opportunity this concourse affords him for discussion of opinions.

He thinks lightly of the mercantile interest, and, in fact, undervalues the manners of the large cities generally. He believes that those who live in them are hollow-hearted and insincere, and wanting in that substantial intelligence and virtue, which he affirms to be characteristic of the country. He is an ardent admirer of the genius of Virginia, and is frequent in his com-

mendation of a toast in which the state is compared to the mother of the Gracchi:—indeed, it is a familiar thing with him to speak of the aristocracy of talent as only inferior to that of the landed interest,—the idea of a freeholder inferring to his mind a certain constitutional pre-eminence in all the virtues of citizenship, as a matter of course.

The solitary elevation of a country gentleman, well to do in the world, begets some magnificent notions. He becomes as infallible as the Pope; gradually acquires a habit of making long speeches, is apt to be impatient of contradiction, and is always very touchy on the point of honor. There is nothing more conclusive than a rich man's logic any where, but in the country, amongst his dependents, it flows with the smooth and unresisted course of a full stream irrigating a meadow, and depositing its mud in fertilizing luxuriance. Meriwether's sayings, about Swallow Barn, import absolute verity. But I have discovered that they are not so current out of his jurisdiction. Indeed, every now and then, we have quite obstinate discussions when some of the neighboring potentates, who stand in the same sphere with Frank, come to the house; for these worthies have opinions of their own, and nothing can be more dogged than the conflict between them. They sometimes fire away at each other with a most amiable and unconvincible hardihood for a whole evening, bandying interjections, and making bows, and saying shrewd things with all the courtesy imaginable. But for unextinguishable pertinacity in argument, and utter impregnability of belief, there is no disputant like your country-gentleman who reads the newspapers. When one of these discussions fairly gets under weigh, it never comes to an anchor again of its own accord;—it is either blown out so far to sea as to be given up for lost, or puts into port in distress for want of documents,—or is upset by a call for the boot-jack and slippers—which is something like the previous question in Congress.

If my worthy cousin be somewhat over-argumentative as a politician, he restores the equilibrium of his character by a considerate coolness in religious matters. He piques himself upon being a high-churchman, but is not the most diligent frequenter of places of worship, and very seldom permits himself to get into a dispute upon points of faith. If Mr. Chub, the Presby-

terian tutor in the family, ever succeeds in drawing him into this field, as he occasionally has the address to do, Meriwether is sure to fly the course; he gets puzzled with scripture names, and makes some odd mistakes between Peter and Paul, and then generally turns the parson over to his wife, who, he says, has an astonishing memory.

He is somewhat distinguished as a breeder of blooded horses; and, ever since the celebrated race between Eclipse and Henry, has taken to this occupation with a renewed zeal, as a matter affecting the reputation of the state. It is delightful to hear him expatiate upon the value, importance, and patriotic bearing of this employment, and to listen to all his technical lore touching the mystery of horse-craft. He has some fine colts in training, which are committed to the care of a pragmatical old Negro, named Carey, who, in his reverence for the occupation, is the perfect shadow of his master. He and Frank hold grave and momentous consultations upon the affairs of the stable, in such a sagacious strain of equal debate, that it would puzzle a spectator to tell which was the leading member in the council. Carey thinks he knows a great deal more upon the subject than his master, and their frequent intercourse has begot a familiarity in the old Negro which is almost fatal to Meriwether's supremacy. The old man feels himself authorized to maintain his positions according to the freest parliamentary form, and sometimes with a violence of asseveration that compels his master to abandon his ground, purely out of faint-heartedness. Meriwether gets a little nettled by Carey's doggedness, but generally turns it off in a laugh. I was in the stable with him, a few mornings after my arrival, when he ventured to expostulate with the venerable groom upon a professional point, but the controversy terminated in its customary way. "Who sot you up, Master Frank, to tell me how to fodder that 'ere cretur, when I as good as nursed you on my knee?"

"Well, tie up your tongue, you old mastiff," replied Frank, as he walked out of the stable, "and cease growling, since you will have it your own way;"—and then, as we left the old man's presence, he added, with an affectionate chuckle—"a faithful old cur, too, that snaps at me out of pure honesty; he has not many years left, and it does no harm to humor him!"

WILLIAM GILMORE SIMMS

1806 - 1870

Little as he is known to later readers Simms is by far the most unile and interesting figure of the Old South. He was built on a generous plan. He was endowed with a rich and prodigal nature, vigorous, spontaneous, creative. There was in him much of Whitman's largeness and coarseness, much of his delight in the good things of earth. He wrote with extraordinary gusto, and his fine strong face suggests that he lived with equal gusto.

—V. L. PARRINGTON, *Main Currents in American Thought*
(1927), II, 127.

Simms was born in Charleston, S. C., on April 17, 1806. He was seventeen years younger than Cooper, and three years older than Poe. His mother died in childbirth in 1808. The Scotch-Irish father, bankrupt and broken-hearted, went to live in the West, leaving the boy to be brought up by the maternal grandmother, Mrs. Gates. The stories which she told him doubtless found more than one echo in the Revolutionary Romances which he was later to write. The schools which he attended were poor, but loneliness and illness helped to make him an omnivorous reader. He would read late at night with his head and a candle hidden in a large box so that his grandmother would not know that he was awake. Judging from his verses, which he began to write early, he must have read much of Byron and Wordsworth; and his romances indicate that he read to some purpose Scott and the Elizabethan dramatists. He was apprenticed to a druggist, but gave up the drug business to study law. About 1824 or 1825 he visited his father, then living in Mississippi, where he saw more of the actual life of the frontiersmen and the Indians than Cooper ever saw. The father, who remembered Charleston "only as a place of tombs," tried to persuade the youth to settle in the West, promising him within ten years a seat in Congress. But the young law student returned to Charleston and his fiancée, Miss Anna Malcolm Giles, whom he married in 1826. The next year he was admitted to the bar, and for a short time he practiced law with some success. But the call of literature and journalism was too strong. Living by one's pen seemed more nearly impossible in the South, if anything, than in the North, but Simms was not to be turned aside. He began with a newspaper, which soon absorbed the little money that had come to him from his mother. His opposition to Nullification did not contribute to his popularity or to the success of his *City Gazette*. In 1832 his wife died (his father and probably his grandmother were already dead); and the penniless Simms must have been profoundly discouraged. In that year he spent some

time in the North—the first of many visits. He became acquainted with William Cullen Bryant and other New York writers.

Simms's first novel, *Martin Faber* (1833), had a fair success. The next year he published the first of his Border Romances, *Guy Rivers*, which had a great run. In 1835 he published two important novels, each his first venture in a new field. These were *The Yemassee*, the earliest of his Colonial Romances, and *The Partisan*, the first of his Revolutionary Romances. *The Yemassee* is for some reason the only one of Simms's romances that is read today. Not quite up to Simms's best, the book contains some excellent scenes, and it gives a somewhat better historical account of the Indians than one finds in the Leather-Stocking Tales. Those who know only *The Yemassee* are likely to reach the mistaken conclusion that Simms is only an inferior Cooper. Simms's best work is to be found in the Revolutionary Romances, which include: *The Partisan* (1835); *Mellichampe* (1836); *The Scout* (1841), first entitled *The Kinsmen*; *Katharine Walton* (1851); *The Forayers, or The Raid of the Dog-Days* (1855), from which our selection is taken; and *Eutaw* (1856). With these belongs also *Woodcraft* (1854), which pictures South Carolina just after the close of the war.

In 1836 Simms married Miss Chevillotte Roach, the daughter of a well-to-do planter; and henceforth Simms lived much of the time at "Woodlands," which is about half-way between Charleston and Augusta, Ga. In his manner of life as well as in the type of fiction which he wrote and the speed with which he composed, Simms reminds one of both Scott and Cooper. His friend, Paul Hamilton Hayne, gives some account of Simms at "Woodlands":

"For a whole morning I have sat in that pleasant library, a book before me, but watching every now and then the tall, erect figure at the desk, and quick, steady passage for hours of the indomitable pen across page after page—a pen that rarely paused to erase, correct, or modify. At last, when the eternal scratch, scratch became a trifle irritating, and this exhaustless labor a reproach to one's semi-idleness, Simms would suddenly turn, exclaiming, 'Near dinner time, my boy; come, let's take a modest appetizer in the shape of sherry and bitters.'

"At dinner he talked a great deal, joked, jested, and punned, like a school-boy freed from his tasks; or, if a graver theme arose, he would often declaim a little too dogmatically and persistently, perhaps, to please those who liked to have the chance of wagging their own tongues occasionally. At such periods it was impossible to edge in the most modest of 'caveats.' Still, Simms could be a charming host, and was, *au fond*, thoroughly genial and kind-hearted. His dictatorial manner, to some extent, originated, I have thought, in the circumstances of his early life."

Much has been made of the failure of Charleston to appreciate Simms's work. When Lord Morpeth came to Charleston and asked about Simms, he was told that Simms was not considered such a great man in his own city. "Simms not a great man!" replied the British peer; "then for God's sake, who is your great man?" Simms himself did not feel that Charleston fully appreciated his efforts to do for South Carolina what Hawthorne was doing for Massachusetts. In 1858, a month after two of his children had died on the same day, he wrote in some personal memoranda a passage recalling his father's advice not to return to Charleston:

"Thirty odd years have passed, and I can now mournfully say the old man was right. All that I have [done] has been poured to waste in Charleston, which has never smiled on any of my labors, which has steadily ignored my claims,

which has disparaged me to the last, has been the last place to give me its adhesion, to which I owe no favor, having never received an office, or a compliment, or a dollar at her hands; and, with the exception of some dozen of her citizens, who have been kind to me, and some scores of her young men, who have honored me with a loving sympathy and something like reverence, which has always treated me rather as a public enemy, to be sneered at, than as a dutiful son doing her honor. *And I, too, know it as a place of tombs.* I have buried six dear children within its soil! Great God! what is the sort of slavery which brings me hither!"

Hayne, who himself had cause to complain of "this material, debased, provincial, narrow-minded South," felt that in Massachusetts or Europe Simms would have fared infinitely better. Possibly. And yet the early struggles of Hawthorne and Carlyle suggest that the lot of the man of letters was no easy one anywhere. Philadelphia was indifferent to Boker, as New York had been to Mrs. Wharton, who were both socially among the best. Charleston's slow refusal to accept Simms was due in part to a lack of tact on his part. To quote Hayne again:

"The scholars and critics of Charleston, men of fastidious classical attainments, and rather exclusive artistic taste, regarded young Simms, to borrow one of his own expressions, as 'an unlicked literary cub,' and mildly ridiculed his earlier performances.

"Doubtless, likewise, they expected from him a degree of deference, which he refused to concede. Thus, a species of feud was inaugurated which appears to have been handed down from the elder scholars to Simms' immediate contemporaries—I mean men nearly of his own age. For a long time, consequently, he was less appreciated in his native city than elsewhere."

After his second marriage, at least, Simms seems to have had many friends among the wealthier class. Note, for example, the dedications of his books, which indicate anything rather than unfriendly relations with South Carolina's best families. In the 'fifties Simms was the center of a coterie to which he refers above as "some scores of her young men, who have honored me with a loving sympathy and something like reverence." The best known of these young men were of course Hayne and Timrod, but there were others; and on the eve of the Civil War Charleston seemed in a fair way to become a literary rival of New York and Boston. During the war Simms's house was twice burned, and the second time, while Sherman's troops were passing through South Carolina, his library (estimated at ten thousand volumes) was destroyed. After the war the old man, in poor health and with many sorrows, practically killed himself from overwork. He died on June 11, 1870, and was buried—with due honors at last—in the Magnolia Cemetery in Charleston.

In Simms one notes what may seem a curious combination of nationalism and sectionalism. He was interested both in building up an American literature free from the influence of British authors and also in putting into literature the life, landscape, and ideals of his native South Carolina. In an unpublished letter to Evert A. Duyckinck, dated July 15, 1845, he wrote:

"If the Authors of Am[erica]. will only work together we may do wonders yet. But our first step will be to disabuse the public mind of the influence of English & Yankee authorities. *Every thing depends on this.* The latter have done more than anything beside to play the devil with all that is manly & original in our literature. They have, curiously enough, fastened our faith to the very writers

who, least of all others, possess a native character. Such is Longfellow, a man of nice taste, a clever imitator,—simply an adroit artist. W. Irving is little more than a writer of delicate taste, a pleasant unobtrusive humor, and agreeable talent. Miss Sedgwick is a better fellow than either, yet not a woman of genius. In imaginative endowment, these are all feeble.—Yet, these are thy gods,—Oh! Israel! But, I trust a better day is at hand. Another war with G. B. [Great Britain] will take us out of our leading strings. It is through our political & social dependence, in great degree, that the national mind suffers.”*

The place which Simms occupies in our literary histories is largely traditional. Too many of our literary historians have apparently read only *The Yemassee* and W. P. Trent's life of Simms. Trent judged Simms's novels by standards which neither Simms nor the present generation of readers would accept. He did not find the romances sufficiently “ennobling.” The one significant bit of Simms criticism in recent years is the chapter which the late V. L. Parrington in 1927 published in his *Main Currents in American Thought*. Parrington finds Simms fundamentally a realist with a leaning toward the picaresque, forced to write historical romances on the formula originating with Scott. The “coarseness” and “vulgarity” of which Victorian readers complained are likely to count in his favor today. At his best Simms is no unworthy rival of Cooper and Melville. Where he suffers most from the comparison with Cooper is in his numerous digressions. One never feels quite sure who his leading characters are or what is the central point of the book. If, however, one reads the Revolutionary Romances, not merely as amusing stories, but as a kind of picaresque epic of the Revolution in South Carolina or a panorama like Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, he will find much to admire.

In addition to the works of Trent and Parrington already mentioned, see Van Wyck Brooks, *The World of Washington Irving* (1944); A. S. Salley, *Catalogue of the Salley Collection of the Works of Wm. Gilmore Simms* (1943); and Alexander Cowie's introduction to *The Yemassee* (1937). For other materials, see Lewis Leary (ed.), *Articles on American Literature . . .* (1947).

Parrington refers to the selection from *The Forayers* given below: “The creative masterpiece of the valiant Porgy was a notable banquet which he proffered General Greene and his staff in their swamp quarters. His infinite resourcefulness in this great affair, his huge inventiveness, elevate the dinner to the rank of a culinary epic.” Porgy, an officer in Marion's partisan militia, is Simms's best character, although his part in the Revolutionary Romances is a minor one. He is a kind of Carolina Falstaff. He is thus described in Chapter XLIII:

“He was a fine-looking fellow, in spite of the too great obtrusion upon the sight of his abdominal territory, a region which he, nevertheless, endeavored to circumscribe within reasonable bounds by a girding of leather, only half covered with a crimson sash, which no doubt had the desired effect in some degree, though at some sacrifice of the wearer's comforts. His face was full almost as the moon at full, of a ruddy brown, his head massive, chin large, and prominent eyes, bright but small, and mouth eager with animation.”

Fully to appreciate the selection, one should begin with Chapter XLIII and read the account of Porgy's elaborate preparations for the dinner, which takes place in the woods. The characters mentioned in the selection are nearly all historical figures. Lee, whom Simms disliked, is “Light Horse Harry” Lee, the father of Robert E. Lee. Horry is pronounced *Horree*, with the accent on the last syllable.

* From the Duyckinck Collection in the New York Public Library; used by permission of the Library.

from THE FORAYERS, OR, THE RAID
OF THE DOG-DAYS (1855)CHAPTER XLVI. HOW PORGY FEASTED THE
CAPTAINS

With vulgar people, a dinner party is the occasion of much fuss and fidgeting. The vulgar egotism is always on the *qui vive* lest something should go wrong—lest something should be wanting to the proper effect—lest, in brief, some luckless excess or deficiency should certainly convey to the guest the secret of those deficiencies, in taste, manners, experiences, and resources, which would, if known, be fatal to the claims of good breeding and high *ton* which the host is most anxious to establish. Those, on the contrary, who feel assured on such points are apt to take the events of a dinner-table coolly and with comparative indifference. A blunder or a deficiency of steward or servant, occasions little or no concern; is never allowed to disturb the equilibrium of the master, who takes for granted that such small matters will be ascribed, by every sensible guest, to the right cause; and for the opinion of all other persons he cares not a button.

The result of this equanimity is to enable him to keep *his mind "in hand"* for the entertainment of his company. He is able to observe and to minister with promptness and full resource, as his wits are not disordered by any feverish workings of his *amour propre*. He sees what is wanting at a glance; supplies the deficiency with a nod; his servants are duly taught in the value of his nod and glance; and the skill of the host, by which the guests are diverted, enables Jack and Gill to wipe up the water which they have spilt so awkwardly, in their uphill progress, without attracting any notice—without filling the scene with most admired disorder.

Our host *knows* his company, and conjures up the special topic which appeals directly to the tastes or the fancies of each. He is vigilant even while he seems most at ease; when his indifference is most apparent, it is made to cover a becoming solicitude for the comfort of the humblest person present. He provides himself with the proper cue to all your prejudices and affections, as by a divine instinct, so that he steers clear of the one, and shapes his course directly for the other; and when the waters are unluckily ruffled, by some bull-headed companion, who treads on his neighbor's toes without even suspecting that he has corns, our host is at hand

to pour oil upon the troubled waters, and soothe to calm the temper which is ruffled. He contrives, at the same time, that the offender shall be taught the nature of his offence, without being brought up to the halberds and set in pillory,

*"Pour encourager les autres."*¹

There was nothing doubtful about the *aplomb* of Captain Porgy. Having prepared his feast according to the full extent of his resources; drilled his awkward squad to the utmost of his capacity and their susceptibilities; seen that they were in sufficient numbers for proper attendance; and made, in brief, all his preparations, he gave himself no further concern, but prepared to receive his guests, with the easy good nature, the frank politeness, the smiling grace, of an old-school gentleman. And it is quite an error to talk, as we are apt to do, of the formality of the old-school gentleman. The gentleman of two hundred or one hundred years ago, differed very slightly in his bearing from the same class at the present day. In due degree as his ceremonials ran into formalities, did he lose the character of the gentleman. In no period was mere form and buckram ever confounded, by sensible people, with politeness and refinement.

Never was gentleman more perfectly at ease in crowded assembly, yet more solicitous of the claims of all about him, than our corpulent captain. His shrewd good sense, nice tastes, playful humors, and frank spirit, all harmonizing happily, enabled him to play the host generally to the equal satisfaction of all his company. He had the proper welcome for each as he drew nigh; the proper word, which set each person at his ease, and prepared him for the development of all his conversational resources.

Among the first of his guests to appear were Governor Rutledge and General Greene. "The really great," said Porgy to Lance Frampton who stood behind him, "never keep the table waiting."

The approach to the scene was through a great natural avenue of lofty green pines, through which the moon was peeping curiously with a bright smile, a disinterested spectator of the proceedings. Music timed the approaches of the guests, the army band having been secured for the evening. Porgy welcomed his guests at the entrance of the area in which his tables had been spread.

¹ "To encourage the others."

"General Greene, Captain Porgy," said Rutledge. Greene took the outstretched hand of the host, saying—

"What I have heard of you, Captain Porgy, makes me trespass without fear of the consequences."

"And what I know of General Greene enables me to welcome him with every hope of the consequences. I am very grateful to Governor Rutledge for doing that which, as a poor captain of militia, I should scarcely have ventured to do myself."

"I knew my customers both, my dear captain," said Rutledge, "and knew how little was necessary to render the regular and volunteer service grateful to each other."

"Be seated, gentlemen," said Porgy, "while I put myself on duty for a while"; and he resumed his place at the opening of the avenue, while Sumter, Marion, and the rest severally presented themselves, were welcomed and conducted to the interior by young Frampton, who did the duties of an aid. Colonel Lee was among the latest to appear.

"My dear Porgy," said he condescendingly—"I am late; but the cavalry of the legion is on vigilant duty to-night, and a good officer you know—eh!"

And he left it to our host to conceive the rest.

"Col. Lee may be forgiven, if late among his friends, when we know that his enemies rarely reproach him for a like remissness."

The grace of Porgy's manner happily blended with the grave dignity of his address. Lee smiled at the compliment:

"Always ready, Porgy—never to be outdone in the play of compliment, or the retort courteous"; and while speaking he was ushered in with other visitors.

The company was at length assembled. The music ceased. A single bugle sounded from the amphitheatre, and the guests disposed themselves without confusion under the whispered suggestions of Lieutenant Frampton. Porgy took his place at the head of the table, standing, till all were seated.

"Gentlemen," said he, "be pleased to find places at the board. Colonel Singleton, you are my *vis-à-vis*. Governor Rutledge, will you honor me by sitting at my right. General Greene, I have presumed to assign you the seat at my left."

Right and left of Singleton, Marion and

Sumter were placed. At one end of the table crossing the centre of the board, Colonel Lee was seated, Colonel Maham occupied the other. Carlington, Horry, Mellichampe, St. Julien, and others found places between these several termini. Scarcely had they been seated when four great calabash tureens were placed severally at the extremities, the odorous vapors from which appealed gratefully to every nostril in company.

"Turtle soup!" was the delighted murmur. "And lemons!"

And as the smoking vessels were set before the governor and General Greene, the former exclaimed—

"Faith, Captain Porgy, your last voyage to the West Indies seems to have been a highly prosperous adventure."

"In truth," said Greene, "I am half inclined to think that there must have been some such enterprise, of which General Marion has forgotten to apprize me."

"I begin seriously to suspect him," said Rutledge. "The fact is that General Marion is so fond of secret enterprises, and audacious ones—does things with so much despatch, and thinks it so easy to do the impossible, that I half believe he has made a three nights' run for the Havana, or sent off a favorite squad on a sortie in that direction. Say, general, is it not so? Let us know the truth of it. You found, among your captures at Georgetown, some ready-rigged sloop or schooner, and sent her out on a cruise in anticipation of this very occasion."

"Nay, governor, the merits of the enterprise, such as it was, and the fruits thereof, are due entirely to our host. It was his adventure wholly, though we share the spoils."

"But, where—where—where—" began Peter Horry, stuttering, "where the devil did he—did he—get 'em—turtles and lemons! I don't—don't—understand it—at all."

"Better not press the inquiry, Horry," said Singleton with a sly smile upon the company—"the discovery will hardly add to your own laurels."

"How—my laurels! What—what—I want to—to know—have my laurels—to do—to do—with the matter?"

"Let's have it, Colonel Singleton," said Rutledge eagerly. "Out with the story. Colonel Horry is so seldom to be caught napping that I shall rejoice to have one story at his expense."

"Ay, ay, the story, Singleton," from a dozen voices around the board.

"Tell—tell—tell, if you will," stuttered Horry—"only be sure, and tell—the—the truth, and shame—you know—who."

"The adventure illustrates the military character of the two gentlemen most admirably," said Singleton. "Colonel Horry is a gentleman of large eyes and grapples with objects of magnitude always. It is Captain Porgy's pleasure to be discriminating and select. The lemons and a variety of other edibles are furnished, unwillingly, I grant you, by Lord Rawdon himself. They form a part of the supplies brought up by Colonel Stewart.² In dashing at Stewart's convoy, Horry passed a mean little wagon in the rear, as quite unworthy his regards. He swept off as you know three or four others of considerable value to the army. But the very littleness of this wagon which Horry had despised, fixed the regards of our host. He quietly possessed himself of it, and was rewarded with the private stores designed for Lord Rawdon himself." The story produced a laugh at the expense of Horry.

"Who—who—who—the devil," said he, "would have thought—of—of—anything good in that rickety concern? I'd like to know, Captain Porgy, what you got besides the lemons?"

"White sugars, coffee, tea, spices, Spanish sweetmeats, preserved ginger, three kegs of Jamaica, and a goodly variety besides!"

"The d—l!—and—and—I to miss 'em all."

"But you got loads of bacon and flour, Horry."

"Several bales of blankets."

"Ay, and a bathing-tub and a complete set of chamber crockery!"

"What," said Rutledge, "was there a bathing-tub and chamber crockery?"

"Yes, indeed."

"Who could have wanted that, I wonder?"

"Some young ensign of the buffs or blues," said Porgy, "whose mother was duly considerate of the young man's skin in a warm climate. You should have discovered Colonel Horry's visage when that wagon was burst open and the contents revealed. The bathing-tub and furniture filled the wagon."

"What did he say, Porgy? Tell us that!"

"Say! Ah! What was it, colonel? Deliver it yourself: nobody can repeat it half so well."

² Lord Rawdon and Colonel Stewart were officers in the British army.

"Re—re—repeat it yourself, if you can!" said Horry stuttering and dipping up his soup with increased rapidity.

"Out with it, Captain Porgy. Horry's speech."

Porgy nodded to Singleton, who answered—"I heard it, and as Horry permits will deliver it. He said, stamping his feet in a rage: 'Throw out the d—d basins, and break up the blasted tub. Who would have thought of any fellow being such a bloody booby as to bring a bathing-tub and chamber crockery into a pond and bush country?'"

And slightly imitating the stammer of Horry so as to give a lively idea of his manner, Singleton set the table in a roar. When the laugh had subsided:—

"But did he break up the crockery, Porgy?"

"Every bowl and basin. He was merciless. You never saw such havoc. His broadsword played elephant in the crockery shop to perfection, and the dragoons, delighted with the humors of their colonel, went into the work of demolition with a rush."

"I had—no—no—no use for the d—d—d—d—d things," said Horry; "and I was de—de—de—terminated to give the d—d puppy that owned them a lesson."

"Ha! ha! ha!"

"But where did the turtles come from?"

"From the genius of my cook, Tom," said Porgy. "The turtle are terrapin from the Caw-caw."

"Not the alligator terrapin, captain, I hope," said Sumter. "I could never bring myself to eat any of that order."

"You have done it on this occasion," said Porgy.

"And very effectually too, general," said Singleton, since I have helped you to a second supply, and you seem in a fair way to need a third."

Sumter looked a little blank.

"Do not be discomfited, general," said Porgy, "since I took the precaution to have all their tails cut off before they were hashed up for the soup."

"But what did you do with the tails?"

"Ah! they were made into balls, with a due proportion of beef and bacon."

"You have caught me beyond escape, captain, since I confess to have done as much execution on the balls as on the soup."

"And you are surprised into a wisdom, gen-

eral, that has cured you of the prejudices of twenty years! What we call the alligator terrapin is the best of the tribe—the fattest, richest, best flavored. It requires only that skill in the dressing which my man Tom supplies.”³

The bugle sounded, Sergeant Millhouse marshalled the waiters to their station, and the emptied vessels were removed. With another blast of the bugle, new dishes were set on the table.

“A noble-looking fish,” said Greene. “What fish is this, Captain Porgy?”

“The greatest delicacy of a fresh-water river, this is the Edisto blue cat—for very nice people a most discouraging name.—Gentlemen, look to yourselves. Here is boiled fish, such as George the Third can not procure; dressed in a style which would not discredit the table of our great ally, the king of France. Men of *goût* will of course prefer the boiled—for the undeveloped taste, the fry is abundant. There are perch and trout in those several dishes. They are all fresh from the Edisto within five hours.”

“Your troopers have been busy, captain.”

“Ay, sir, and my cook. He was fortunate in his search along the river this morning, to come upon three or four fish-traps, which he emptied without leave. Governor, the melted butter is beside you. By-the-way, those naval biscuit are also from the stores of my Lord Rawdon—General, do not dream of defiling that fish with vinegar. It is an abomination in this case. The fish only entreats the butter, and the dressing is complete.”

The eye of Porgy swept the table. The guests

³ Sometimes even his [Simms's] young admirers were tempted to make his peculiarities the subject of a practical joke. For example, Simms prided himself on his gastronomic attainments, and in the person of Lieutenant Porgy once allowed himself to grow eloquent over the delicacy of a stew made of alligator terrapins. But there were some heretics in ‘the club’ who did not believe that Simms had ever eaten an alligator terrapin, and they determined to try him on the dish for which he had given so elaborate a receipt. They procured one of the monsters after some delay and trouble, and, having arranged for the proper making of the stew, invited Simms to supper. The veteran came, and was bountifully helped to his favorite dish. At the very first mouthful he made a wry face, and exclaimed: ‘For heaven’s sake, boys, where did you get this rancid stuff?’ ‘That is alligator terrapin, stewed à la Porgy, Mr. Simms,’ was the reply. ‘Ah,’ said the discomfited romancer, ‘you must have made some mistake with the receipt.’ (W. P. Trent, *William Gilmore Simms*, pp. 236-237).

discussed the fish with the relish of starving men. There was a cessation. The finger of Porgy was lifted. Millhouse’s bugle gave tongue, and the fish was superseded with a variety of dishes.

5 “General Greene—Governor Rutledge—suffer me to persuade you both to the ragout which is before me.”

“What is it, captain?”

10 “Try it, general. It is the alerta—the green alerta—a sort of chicken you will find it, but far superior. The stew is of the *lagarta*, according to the Spaniards, and a dish quite as rare as exquisite on table. Gentlemen, interspersed with these dishes you will find more familiar, but inferior ones. There are hams and tongues, both from the stores of Lord Rawdon, and, in fact, most of this course will be found of foreign character. You will please ask me for no more revelations touching my mode of procuring supplies, as I have no wish to expose the breaking of any more crockery. It is not every one of our partisans who can bear, with so much equanimity as Colonel Horry, the story of his own acquisitions, and how made.”

25 “This—what do you call it?” said Greene.

“Alerta!”

“Is delicious!”

“And nothing could be more savory than this stew, Captain Porgy.”

30 “Yes, indeed, governor—the Spaniards have the merit of the discovery. But gentlemen, with this course, it is time to spiritualize the feast.”

The speaker’s finger was uplifted, and two enormous bowls of punch were set down at the two ends of the table.

35 “Gentlemen, we owe a great deal to the providence of Lord Rawdon.”

“And the improvidence of Horry,” whispered Rutledge. “For, of a verity, had he captured these spoils, he would never have made the same use of them as our host has done.”

40 “Sir,” said Porgy with solemnity, “he would have wasted them—naked, upon his dragoons.—Gentlemen, you will please fill for a sentiment. Colonel Singleton, see that your end of the table charges duly.”

“We are ready, captain.”

Porgy rising:—

50 “Gentlemen, our first regular sentiment: ‘The cause of Liberty—the cause of the American continent—the cause of all continents wherever man has a living soul!’ ”

“Music.” And the bands struck up.

"Captain Porgy," said Lee, "send me, if you please, a second supply of that dish which you call the *alerta*. I don't know what sort of bird it is, but the savor is that of young pigeons. It is wonderfully nice."

"I agree with you, Lee," said Colonel Williams, "though I have no more idea what the bird is than of the mansions of the moon. Let me trouble you also, Captain Porgy."

"I must also trespass, captain," said Carrington. "Ordinarily, I seldom suffer myself to eat of dishes of which I know nothing; but these foreign meats come to us under good guaranties, though half the time without a name at all."

"Unless French, which is so much Greek to me," said Maham. "Captain, that *lagarta* stew is princely."

"No crowned head in Europe enjoys the like. Shall I help you, Colonel Maham?"

"Thank you, yes. But I thought you called it foreign."

"So it is—in one sense; but this is not imported. It is wholly domestic."

"Well, foreign or domestic, it is first rate," said Greene. "I will try a little more of it, Captain Porgy."

"Ah! general,"—with a smile—"suffer me to say that is only in the militia service, after all, that the taste properly refines. Governor, shall I serve you?"

"Thank you, I will mince a little of your *lagarta*, captain," and a sly glance of Rutledge apprized the captain of his suspicions. But the face of Porgy made no revelations.

"Gentlemen," said Singleton, at the other end of the table, "fill your glasses."

"Ready, all," said Porgy.

Singleton rose, and gave:—

"South Carolina—almost freed from the footstep of the foreign tyrant, and rising to the full assertion of her own sovereignty!"

A brilliant burst from John Rutledge, brief, but like a fiery tongue speaking to the soul, followed this sentiment; and the music rose into a triumphant peal as his voice died away upon the echoes. Other sentiments succeeded other speeches; Rutledge, Greene, Marion, Sumter, Lee, were all duly honored with toasts, and all responded, each after his own fashion, all unaffectedly, simply, and with the proper earnestness of soldiers. And the punch flowed anew into fresh goblets, and the merriment grew high, and some of the grave barons began to sing in

snatches, and the volunteer toasts filled up the pauses in the conversation. Meanwhile, a score of melons were placed upon the board, and the preserved fruits from the West Indies, guava and ginger, were crowded upon the board, and provoked new merriment at the expense of Rawdon, who lost, and Horry, who refused to find the prize.

And while they gashed deeply the purple centres of the melons, Rutledge suddenly said to Porgy:—

"And now, Captain, that you have had your triumph, that all present have borne testimony in the least equivocal manner to the merits of your feast, I would fain know of what those foreign dishes were compounded, of which, knowing nothing, all have partaken so freely. Hams and tongues, fresh from Britain, designed for my Lord Rawdon's own table, have been sent away from yours uncut—proof of homage, the most profound, to yet preferable meats. Pray tell us, then, what were the elements of your *lagarta* and your *alerta*—your *ragouts* and stews."

"Ay, ay," seconded the company, "let us know. What were the birds?"

"I should really be pleased to know, Captain Porgy," said General Greene, bowing, "touching those birds."

"There need be no mystery in it now, general, since, as Governor Rutledge says, the feast has triumphed. But I am afraid I shall too greatly confound you, when I state that the dishes contained no birds at all. The stew of *alerta* was compounded chiefly of the race which helped Homer in the construction of an epic—a race which Milton describes as the—

*"Small infantry
Warred on by cranes."*

"You surely do not mean *frogs*, Captain Porgy?" cried Lee, with affected horror in his accents.

"Your guess is a sagacious one, and worthy of the legion, Colonel Lee."

"Good heaven! and is it come to this, that the soldiers of liberty should be reduced to the necessity of frog-eating?"

"Necessity, Colonel Lee!" exclaimed Rutledge. "By heaven, sir, it should be matter of taste and preference, sir, if only in due deference to our great Gallic ally; but, of a truth, sir, after to-day's feast, it should be a new argument in behalf of liberty, that she has brought us to

such rare fine feeding and such improved tastes."

"And the other dish, Captain Porgy," demanded Sumter, "the stew with the Spanish name?"

"The name speaks for itself—*lagarta*. It is of the great lizard family—the cayman—in vulgar speech, the alligator. But the specimens employed, gentlemen, were mere juveniles; young vagabonds, whose affectionate parents had hardly suffered them out of sight before. They have probably never fed on larger prey than their neighbors of the alerta family."

"One question, Captain Porgy," said Carrington: "be so good as to inform me, if, among your several unfamiliar dishes, I have had the happiness to eat of the rattlesnake, the viper, the moccasin, or the boa-constrictor?"

"Alas! colonel, I grieve to say that you have not. I should have been pleased to have got a couple of young chicken-snakes, but I was not fortunate in the search. We got a glimpse of a few runners,⁴ but they were quite too swift of foot for the hunters. The chicken-snake is of unexceptionable tenderness; the runner is a little too muscular, if not previously well sodden; but, unless near a hencoop, or a corncrib, it is not easy to find the chicken-snake. I repeat my regrets that I could not secure this delicacy for my table. But another time, Colonel Carrington, should you sup with me, I will make a special effort in your behalf."

"I thank you, sir; do not suffer your regrets to disturb you. For that matter, I am half doubtful whether your *alerta* and *lagarta*, of which I have, in my ignorance, partaken somewhat too freely, will continue to lie lightly on my soul or stomach."

"Have no fears, sir; and the better to secure their repose, do me the honor, sir, of a bowl of punch with me. Gentlemen, I entreat the whole table to our companionship."

And the vessels were filled and emptied.

"And now, gentlemen," continued the host, "I give you—'The poets, who minister at once to Apollo, to Bacchus, and to Mars,' and beg to introduce you to the only representative of the faculty in our squadron, Mr. George Dennison, my ensign. If I mistake not, he has been this day as busy with the muse, as I with my cook; and, if we will suffer him, he will bring us gifts from Parnassus not unworthy of those which we have

enjoyed from the provision-wagon of Lord Rawdon."

"In which Horry, going from Dan to Beer-sheba, could see nothing."

"Having a taste for baths, warming-pans, and chamber-furniture."

"'Nough of that—that—Singleton! I—I—I'm a sinner be—be—beyond salvation, if I ever pass a little mean-looking wagon again, without seeing what's in it."

"But—Mr. Dennison," said Rutledge.

"George! Geordie!" said Porgy, good-humoredly. The poet, hitherto the only silent person at table, now rose—a tall, slender person, of bright, lively eye, mouth full of expression, Grecian nose, and great forehead rising up like a tower. His cheeks were flushed, his frame trembled, and there was an evident quivering of the lip which was discernible to every eye about him. Dennison sang the verses, which he wrote, in a clear, military voice, shrill like a clarion. There was, perhaps, no great deal of music in his composition, but enough for the present purpose, and of the kind best suited, perhaps, for a military gathering—bold, free, eager and full of animation. His ballad had been the work of that very afternoon.

He had no prefaces. But, waiting till the music hushed, and the voices, he then began.—

THE BATTLE FEAST

*To the dark and bloody feast,
Haste ye battle vultures, haste;
There is banquet, man and beast,
For your savage taste:
Never on such costly wassail
Did ye flesh your beaks before;
Come, ye slaves of Hesse Cassel,⁵
To be sold no more!*

*Small your cost to George of Britain,
One and sixpence sterling down,⁶
Yet for this, ye sorry chapmen,
Each will lose his crown;
Freedom knows no price for valor,
Yours is measured by the groat,
Britain pays in gold and silver,
We in steel and shot.*

⁵ The Hessians, hired at so much per head to the crown of Britain, for the war in America, formed no small portion of the British army. (The notes on the poem are Simms's.)

⁶ We are not sure that Master George Dennison is altogether right in this statement of the hire of the Hessians per head, but the difference is immaterial, whether in poetry or history.

⁴ Black snakes.

*Recreants, ye from Scottish Highlands,⁷
 Lately rebels to the throne
 Of that brutal foreign despot,
 Now, whose sway ye own;
 Ye are welcome to the banquet,
 Which is spread for all who come,
 Where the eaten is the eaten,
 And the deathsmen goes to doom*

*And ye braggart sons of Erin,
 Loathing still the sway ye bear,
 Groaning in the very fetters,
 Ye would make us wear,
 Ever writhing, ever raging,
 'Neath the bonds ye can not break—
 Here the bloody banquet woos ye,
 Gather and partake!*

*Stoop, ye vultures, to the issue,
 It will be ere set of sun!
 Mark whose valor bides the longest,
 Blood of price or blood of none.
 Comes the Tartan of Glenorchy,
 Comes the sullen Saxon boor,
 Comes the light-heeled German yager,
 Crowding to the shore!*

*Who shall meet them by the water,
 On the mountain, in the vale,
 Meet them with the stroke of slaughter,
 Till the right arm fail?
 Wherefore ask? Yon pealing summons,
 Finds fit answer, sharp and soon,
 Answer fit for peers and commons,
 Yager and dragoon.*

*Lo! the soul that makes a nation,
 Which, from out the ranks of toil,
 Upward springs in day of peril,
 Soul to save the soil!
 Comes a high and mighty aspect,
 From the shores of Powhatan;—
 Lo! in him the nation's hero,
 Glorious perfect man!⁸*

*Follows, rugged as his mountains,
 Daring man from Bennington;⁹*

⁷ The exiled rebels of '45, when settled in America, almost wholly proved adherents of that monarch whom, as followers of the Stuarts, they opposed to the knife. The disasters of '45 cured them of all propensity to rebellion. Even the Macdonalds, the famous Hector—Flora who saved the Pretender—all became loyal to George the Third in America, and fought against the patriots.

⁸ Washington.

⁹ Stark.

*Blacksmith stout from Narragansett,¹⁰
 Good where deeds are done.
 Comes the keen-eyed Santee rifle,
 Sleepless still and swift as flame,
 Rowel rashing,¹¹ bullet winging,¹²
 Man of deadly aim.*

*Stoop, ye vultures, to the issue,
 Stoop, and scour the bloody plain,
 Flesh your beaks where fat the carnage,
 Mountains of the slain.
 Whose the skull your talon rendeth,
 Eye, within your dripping beak,
 Speechless tongue that loosely lolleth
 On divided cheek?*

*In the tartan of Glenorchy,
 Scarlet of the Saxon boor,
 Gray frock of the Hessian yager
 Strewn from mount to shore;
 Read the fate of hireling valor,
 Read the doom of foreign foe,
 Know that he who smites for freedom,
 Ever strikes the deadly blow!*

It was in the midst of the compliments of the party to the poet, that Willie Sinclair stole in to the table, and plucked the sleeve of Marion, who rose quickly and quietly, and went out with him in silence. The company sat at the table some time longer.

"Why your poet seems a genuine Birserker [sic], Captain Porgy. This chant was worthy to be sung in the hall of Odin. Does he fight as bravely as he sings?"

"Every bit, sir, and he goes into battle with the same convulsive sort of tremor with which he begins to sing or to recite. But that passes off in a few moments, and then he fairly rages. In fact, sir, it is not easy for him to arrest himself, and he sometimes shows himself rather too savage in strife—with rather too great an appetite for blood."

"You are as fortunate, Captain Porgy, in your poet as your cook; I would I could persuade them from you!—Who?—Do you say?"

These last words were spoken to Lieutenant Frampton, who had whispered something into Rutledge's ear.

"Colonel Sinclair, your excellency. He waits you without, along with General Marion."

"Instantly"—and, watching his opportunity,

¹⁰ Greene.

¹¹ Sumter.

¹² Marion.

while beakers were filling, Rutledge stole away. Greene followed his example, so did Sumter and the elder officers; the young ones remained, and soon Captain Porgy, his veneration no longer active, was in full flight, keeping the table in a roar, with merry jest, jibe, and story, till the hours grew something smaller than the stars, and the moon had a hooded, downcast looking visage, as if she had seen or heard something to shock her modesty. Let us leave the revellers while they make a final onslaught upon the punch-bowls.

THE LOST PLEIAD

(1829, 1859)

This, the best known of Simms's poems, was, he tells us, "written between my eighteenth and twentieth year." It is not generally known that thirty years after its first appearance he published a much-revised and considerably expanded version of the poem in the *Southern Field and Fireside* for May 28, 1859. The revised text is here reprinted for the first time.

I

Not in the sky—no longer in the sky,
Where, beautiful as high,
She swayed serene,
The centre of her circle and its Queen—
Most bright of all her happy sisterhood,
And by all bright ones woo'd!—
Secure of homage from fond eyes, that brood,
Nightly, in spheres below;
Who, looking with deep longing, feel their wings
With each pulsation grow;
Feel, with the yearning for immortal things,
The strength for heavenward flight;
And travel far, with fancy, to delight—
Still upward drawn by the sweet welcoming eyes
That showed them, first, the skies!

II

Gone from the skies! In vain
We seek her beauty through the ethereal plain,
And the far blue of its mysterious deep.
No more—no more!
Shall Ocean, in the mirror of her sleep,
Give back the beauteous image to our gaze!
And, in our sad amaze,
We turn from sky to sea, from sea to shore;
And, as the white caps of the glistening wave
Flash, as with gems cast up from Ocean's cave,
We start with joyful cry;

We dream the beautiful Queen once more on
high,

The bright one of the sky!
Alas! the fond illusion! It is o'er!—

5 Not even the sovereign Fancy may restore
Our sovereign to her throne! We must go weep,
That the Bright Watcher may no longer keep
Her sphere, at summons of the adoring eye!

III

10 Gone! Gone!
From sky and earth, from mount and seal
There is a void of Beauty! Never more
Shall rise the chaunt from forest home or shore!
15 The sweet fond homage of most worshipping
eyes,
That swim in sorrow, gazing on the skies,
Where vacancy makes eminent the void!
How lone! How lone! How lone!
20 The bright'st of all the brightest ones destroyed!
The lesser loveliness that still is left,
But shows the greater glory in the Lost!
Of this, the *One*, bereft,
We are as men at sea, by tempests tost,
25 Looking out vainly for the one true star,
Worth all the Host, to teach us where we are!

IV

Men need their beacons all!
30 Their stars and guiding lights, to save from
thrall;
And something dearer, shining from above,
To teach them where to look, and how to love!
For we all love!
35 We are but children on the Desert! Some
Never reach home!
Others, for yet a thousand years will roam,
Lacking some starry pilot of the sky;
And so they droop along the path, and die
40 Of a drear blindness, never opening eye!
Thou wast the Eye to many—dear to most;
As central, and the fairest of Heaven's host!
Thou wast their boast!
Oh! did'st thou grow thine own?
45 Thou wast their thing of worship and of pride—
By their devotion fed, and deified!
Did'st thou forget? and had'st thou to atone?
We know that thou art gone;
Hast left thy sapphire throne;
50 And, never again to cheer
The Mariner, who holds his course alone
On the Atlantic, through the weary night,

When common stars turn watchers, and do sleep,
Shalt thou appear
Over all others bright,
With all the sweet, loving certainty of light,
Down shining on the shut eyes of the Deep!

v

Shall the sky lose
Her glory, and the ungrateful Earth refuse
Her lamentation? Shall the Beauty part
From Nature, and the great void of the heart
Have never a ministry of Love, whose tear
Shall soothe the suffering, and subdue the fear?—
Bring precious nurture to the Hope that lies,
Buried and perishing fast, beneath our eyes?
Shall no responsive wail
From the defrauded elements prevail,
When Night is shorn of Beauty, and the Day
Palsied, goes staggering on his sullen way?

vi

It is not so permitted—so decreed;
At each great loss, the world's great heart must
bleed;
Must feel the throes of anguish, and deplore
The vacancy it feels forevermore;
And cannot, by its prayer,
Or passionate plaint, restore;
For the first time, aware
Of that wan spectre, whom we call Despair!
Thus Sorrow broods along the lonely hills,
And wilder griefs go surging through the floods;
How vexed the chiding of the little rills,
How dread the murmur in the mighty woods!
In night and silence each sad fountain fills
Her cistern; and a Spectral Presence broods
Blackening their waters! Through the unhal-
lowed air
Steals a stark, shuddering Fear,
That cowers and crouches ever as it goes,
As dreading ambushed Foes;
Without the feet to fly,
The heart to cry!

vii

See, as the Day is spent,
The Arab leaves his tent;
Well hath he conn'd, of stars, the mystic lore;
His studies teach,
A mortal Fate in each,
Pledged at each several birth,
To some lone Pilgrim of the benighted Earth,

That shows the path and guides him evermore!
So, too, the shepherd on Chaldea's hills
At evening home returning, with his flocks,
Looks, from his perilous heights, along the rocks,
For the one star whose smiling preference fills
His soul with Faith and Rapture—glads his gaze
With promise of protection, sweet as sure!
But now, no beauties blaze,
No smile comes sudden with a sweet surprise!
Vainly he strains his eyes,
For the soft glory that made clear his ways!
Much doth he marvel, in the saddest maze,
While through the sorrowful vault the Dark
distils
Her dews that blight;—
Lingers in longing; dreaming yet that Night
Will surely bring the expected and sweet light
So natural to his sight.

viii

20 Nor earth alone!
Nor man! The sorrow broods
Above the rocks, the plains, the rills, the floods,
Afar! afar!
25 In realms of Sun and Star!
There, glorious Beings, each upon his throne,
Join in the common moan!
There, where at first she shone
Radiant among the sisterhood, the wail
30 Streams nightly on the gale!
Well may they chaunt, in melancholy tone!
How should they dream, until *her* fate was
known,
That such as they are confiscate to Death?
35 That Fate and dark oblivion should prevail,
The Perfect and the Beautiful to mar?
That, like the creatures of the lowlier spheres—
The common blooms of earth—
Beings of mortal breath,
40 As mortal birth—
The seraphs should be blasted; doom'd to fears;
Lose all their rich effulgence, sink in years;
Sudden extinguish'd in some fatal hour;
Flash even in falling, and with meteor rush,
45 Sweep down their summits, all one glorious gush;
Then the dread darkness, and the horrid hush!
And this without one omen to prepare;
Even while the song floats free in pride and
power,
50 And liquid echoes linger in the air,
That shows all peaceful on the eternal heights!
Oh! in the very midst of dear delights,

And dreaming never of such dread mischance,
The heavens aflush with congregate forms and
wings

That swim together in twining maze and dance,
While some superior seraph sits and sings;
Even then the wild, deep wail! From where? Oh!
Where?

There! there!
Over the precipice!
Far down the black abyss!
A flash! a glory, shed from golden plumes,
The Stygian depth illumines—
A moment—and but one!
The gulph's black billows o'er a sister roll,
And a dread shudder shakes each kindred soul,
Down-gazing, in their horror, as they see!
All their concerted springs of harmony
Snapt rudely—all the generous music gone,
And dread and terror now where joy alone
Made all felicity!
And shall there be no moan?

IX

Oh! still is the strain,
As of fresh sorrows, wailing through the sky,
Repeats the sad refrain—
Soul-chaunting and soul-wakening melody;
The sister stars, lamenting in their pain,
That one of the selectest ones should die;
Torn from the rest,
When loveliest, happiest, best;
Blessing and blest;
When her own song was sweetest, and her eye,
Brightest of all on high!
That such as she should fall,
Headlong, in all the beauty of her bright,
From the empyreal grandeur of her height;
Over such precipice;
Down, to such drear abyss,
The depths of fathomless night;
May well be life-long terror to them all!

X

Alas! the Destiny
Clogs ever the possession with a Fear!
That haunting sense of Insecurity,
Makes every treasure of the heart, a care!
Even as we cry,
"Eureka! Soul be joyful! It is here!"
The bitter, mocking echo, makes reply,
"Where? Where? O! where?"
And the storm sweeps our starbeam from the
sky!

Thus, fastened to the bosom of the Bliss,
Clings ever a sad caprice!
We snatch the flower above the precipice,
And fall in snatching. Our free footsteps miss,
5 While our hands clutch—and, with the treasure
won,

We are undone!
In very Rapture, a sharp Terror abides;
Her song-burst carries anguish in its tone;
10 Like the deep murmur of the swelling tides,
Though full and bright,
No cloud in sight,
The glorious Moon, in smiles, o'er ocean glides!
The Hope most precious is the soonest lost!
The flow'r of Love is first to feel the frost!
Methinks, all beautiful, of earthly things,
First die; and little doth it then console,
To know, that it hath put on heavenly wings,
And is already shining in its goal!
20 We only feel—'tis gone! forever gone!
The blessed thing we've known.
And we are lone—how lone! How very lone!
Ah! like the bright star shooting down the sky,
Was it not loveliest as it fell from high,
25 And darkling, left the sphere,
Now cold and drear,
It ever made so beautiful and dear!

30 THE DECAY OF A PEOPLE

(1853)

This the true sign of ruin to a race—
It undertakes no march, and, day by day
35 Drowns in camp, or, with the laggard's pace,
Walks sentry o'er possessions that decay;
Destined, with sensible waste, to fleet away;—
For the first secret of continued power
Is the continued conquest;—all our sway
40 Hath surety in the uses of the hour;
If that we waste, in vain wall'd town and lofty
tower!

45 THE EDGE OF THE SWAMP

(1853)

'Tis a wild spot, and even in summer hours,
With wondrous wealth of beauty and a charm
50 For the sad fancy, hath the gloomiest look,
That awes with strange repulsion. There, the
bird
Sings never merrily in the sombre trees,

That seem to have never known a term of youth,
Their young leaves all being blighted. A rank
growth

Spreads venomously round, with power to taint;
And blistering dew's await the thoughtless hand 5
That rudely parts the thicket. Cypressess
Each a great ghastly giant, eld and gray,
Stride o'er the dusk, dank tract,—with buttresses
Spread round, apart, not seeming to sustain,
Yet link'd by secret twines, that, underneath, 10
Blend with each arching trunk. Fantastic vines,
That swing like monstrous serpents in the sun,
Bind top to top, until the encircling trees
Group all in close embrace. Vast skeletons
Of forests, that have perish'd ages gone,
Moulder, in mighty masses, on the plain;
Now buried in some dark and mystic tarn,
Or sprawl'd above it, resting on great arms,
And making, for the opossum and the fox,
Bridges, that help them as they roam by night.
Alternate stream and lake, between the banks,
Glimmer in doubtful light. smooth, silent, dark,
They tell not what they harbor; but, beware!
Lest, rising to the tree on which you stand,
You sudden see the moccasin snake heave up
His yellow shining belly and flat head
Of burnish'd copper. Stretch'd at length,
behold

Where yonder Cayman,¹³ in his natural home,
The mammoth lizard, all his armor on,
Slumbers half-buried in the sedgy grass,
Beside the green ooze where he shelters him.
The place, so like the gloomiest realm of death,
Is yet the abode of thousand forms of life,—
The terrible, the beautiful, the strange,—
Wingèd and creeping creatures, such as make
The instinctive flesh with apprehension crawl,
When sudden we behold. Hark! at our voice
The whooping crane, gaunt fisher in these
realms,

Erects his skeleton form and shrieks in flight,
On great white wings. A pair of summer ducks,

Most princely in their plumage, as they hear
His cry, with senses quickening all to fear,
Dash up from the lagoon with marvellous haste,
Following his guidance. See! aroused by these,
And startled by our progress o'er the stream,
The steel-jaw'd Cayman, from his grassy slope,
Slides silent to the slimy green abode,
Which in his province. You behold him now,
His bristling back uprising as he speeds
To safety, in the centre of the lake,
Whence his head peers alone,—a shapeless knot,
That shows no sign of life, the hooded eye,
Nathless, being ever vigilant and sharp,
Measuring the victim. See! a butterfly,
15 That, traveling all the day, has counted climes
Only by flowers, to rest himself a while,
And, as a wanderer in a foreign land,
To pause and look around him ere he goes,
Lights on the monster's brow. The surly mute
Straightway goes down; so suddenly, that he,
The dandy of the summer flowers and woods,
Dips his light wings, and soils his golden coat,
With the rank waters of the turbid lake.
Wondering, and vex'd, the plumèd citizen
25 Flies with an eager terror to the banks,
Seeking more genial natures,—but in vain.
Here are no gardens such as he desires,
No innocent flowers of beauty, no delights
Of sweetness free from taint. The genial growth
30 He loves, finds here no harbor. Fetid shrubs,
That scent the gloomy atmosphere, offend
His pure patrician fancies. On the trees,
That look like felon spectres, he beholds
No blossoming beauties; and for smiling heavens,
35 That flutter his wings with breezes of pure balm,
He nothing sees but sadness—aspects dread,
That gather frowning, cloud and fiend in one,
As if in combat, fiercely to defend
Their empire from the intrusive wing and beam.
40 The example of the butterfly be ours.
He spreads his lacquer'd wings above the trees,
And speeds with free flight, warning us to seek
For a more genial home, and couch more sweet
Than these dread borders offer us to-night.

¹³ Alligator.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

1809 - 1849

Thus I have written no books, and have been so far essentially a Magazinish [illegible] bearing not only willingly but cheerfully sad poverty and the thousand consequent contumelies and other ills which the condition of the mere Magazinish entails upon him in America, where, more than in any other region upon the face of the globe, to be poor is to be despised.

POE TO CHARLES ANTHON, June, 1844.

Once as yet, and once only, has there sounded out of it all [the literature of America] one pure note of original song—worth singing, and echoed from the singing of no other man, a note of song neither wide nor deep, but utterly true, rich, clear, and native to the singer; the short exquisite music, subtle and simple and somber and sweet, of Edgar Poe.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE,
Under the Microscope (1872).

Edgar Allan¹ Poe was born on January 19, 1809, exactly two years after another great Virginian, Robert E. Lee. Ironically enough, Poe was born in Boston, to which he often referred as the "Frogpond." Bred in the South, he had no love for New England and little admiration for any of the New England writers except Hawthorne and, at times, Longfellow and Lowell. On July 6, 1842, he wrote to Daniel Bryan: "I shall make war to the knife against the New England assumption of 'All the decency and all the talent' which has been so disgustingly manifested in the Rev. Rufus W. Griswold's 'Poets and Poetry of America.' " The New England writers cared quite as little for Poe as he for them. Emerson called him "the jingle-man."

Much is known about Poe's life, but the man and his work do not lend themselves to easy and accurate generalization. As Hervey Allen well says, "any brief, comfortably-clever, and convenient presentation of his character, either from a literary, psychological, or romantic standpoint is bound to be misleading." Even at this late day students of Poe do not agree as to his character or the value of his writings. Most of his important literary contemporaries differed from him in that they were not wholly dependent on their pens for their livelihood. Most of them were well-born and had a secure position in the social scale. Since he lived in a time

¹ Note the spelling of Poe's middle name, which apparently few journalists or undergraduates ever learn to spell correctly.

when nearly all our writers were model gentlemen, Poe's shortcomings in conduct seemed very grave. He was the first conspicuous black sheep in the American literary flock. American critics could not look upon Poe's deficiencies as leniently as they looked upon those of Burns or Byron. There was no one to say, as a latter-day critic, J. E. Spingarn, has said in his "The New Criticism," "The poet's only moral duty, as a poet, is to be true to his art, and to express his vision of reality as well as he can." In the last year of his life, the year of the gold-rush to California, Poe wrote to his friend, F. W. Thomas:

"Depend upon it after all, Thomas, literature is the most noble of professions. In fact, it is about the only one fit for a man. For my own part there is no seducing me from the path. I shall be a *littérateur* at least, all my life; nor would I abandon the hopes which still lead me on for all the gold in California. Talking of gold and of the temptations at present held out to 'poor-devil authors' did it ever strike you that all that is really valuable to a man of letters—to a poet in especial—is absolutely unpurchasable? Love, fame, the dominion of intellect, the consciousness of power, the thrilling sense of beauty, the free air of Heaven, exercise of body & mind—these and such as these are really all that a poet cares for: . . ."

Poe's parents were actors; the mother was an Englishwoman, the father a Marylander of a good family somewhat run down. They both died early, leaving three small children. At the age of three Edgar was taken into the family of John Allan, a Scotch merchant living in Richmond, Virginia, who was later to become wealthy. Allan, although he never legally adopted the boy, brought him up as if he were his own child. In 1815 the Allans went to England for a stay of five years. For a part of this time Poe studied in the Manor House School at Stoke Newington, which is the background of his story, "William Wilson." In 1818 Allan wrote of him that he was "a fine boy" and could read Latin "pretty sharply." On their return to Richmond, Poe was sent to a local academy, where he showed ability in swimming as well as in languages and declamation. This was the period of his friendship with the mother of one of his school friends, Mrs. Jane Stith Stanard, to whom "To Helen" is addressed. As a youth, Poe was sensitive and moody and had few close friends. An estrangement was developing between Poe and Allan, which Mrs. Allan, until her death in 1829, tried to prevent from becoming a complete break. In one sense the difficulties between the two constitute the old, familiar story of the practical, prosaic father or guardian trying to make of the young musician, painter, or poet a good lawyer, bookkeeper, country gentleman, or lighthouse engineer. But John Allan, it develops, was not by any means the "benevolent Virginian gentleman" that Barrett Wendell, writing about 1900, thought he was. The youthful Poe was doubtless difficult to handle, but Allan's unsympathetic treatment of him is not wholly to be explained as that of a practical guardian trying to make of his foster son a substantial, self-supporting member of society.

Poe spent most of the calendar year 1826 at Thomas Jefferson's newly founded University of Virginia, where he made an excellent record in Latin and French. Although he seems not in any way to have incurred the displeasure of the academic authorities, he was unhappy. Just before leaving Richmond, he had become engaged to Sarah Elmira Royster (who seems to be the original of the heroine of his "Tamerlane"); but her parents intercepted the letters of the lovers. Perhaps Elmira's parents had learned that John Allan, now well-to-do, had no intention of making Poe his heir. At any rate, they persuaded her to marry another man. That Poe took

to gambling and drinking, both of which were common vices at the University, was due, he claims, to his guardian's stinginess in not giving him sufficient money to pay his University fees and living expenses. At the end of the year Poe, owing about \$2500 in debts of honor which Allan refused to pay, was taken back to Richmond. Although Allan seems not to have put Poe to work in his store, as is often said, there was in March, 1827, a bitter quarrel between the two, after which the eighteen-year-old boy left Richmond without money and virtually disowned by his foster father. Somehow he made his way to Boston, where in the same year he published his first volume, *Tamerlane and Other Poems*, which is now probably the most valuable collector's item in American literature. For two years Poe served in the U. S. Army under the name of Edgar A. Perry. Part of the time he was stationed at Charleston, South Carolina, where doubtless he became familiar with the geographical background of "The Gold-Bug." In 1829 he published in Baltimore his second volume of poems. The "Ligeia" passage in a long poem, "Al Aaraaf," is the first really fine poetry that he had written. But none of Poe's first three volumes of poems—there was a third in 1831—attracted much attention. Allan helped him to obtain an appointment to West Point, which Poe entered in 1830. He did well in his classes, but he was disappointed to find that his army record would not shorten the four-year period required for graduation. Finally, now that Allan had remarried, he gave up all hope of an inheritance. The work at the Military Academy was uncongenial, and perhaps he felt that even if he finished the course and obtained a commission, he would not be able to live on his salary. At any rate, Poe took the only obvious way to get out of the Academy and got himself dismissed for failure to attend classes, etc. In February, 1831, with no money and poor prospects of every kind, in poor health and spirits, he left West Point, apparently determined to live by his pen. One of the first things he did was to publish his third volume of poems in New York. The cadets, to whom he had dedicated it, must have felt badly cheated, for they had subscribed to the volume looking for lampoons on their instructors.

The next four years, which are somewhat obscure, seem to have been spent in Baltimore. With his older brother, William Henry Leonard Poe, also a poet, Poe lived with their aunt, Mrs. Maria Clemm, whose daughter Virginia he was to marry a few years later. Having published three volumes of poems which attracted almost no attention, Poe now began to devote his attention to prose fiction. He submitted several stories to the Philadelphia *Saturday Courier* in competition for a prize. The *Courier* published some of the stories, but it awarded the prize to "Love's Martyr," by Miss Delia Bacon, who was later to trouble Hawthorne with her strange theory that Francis Bacon was the author of Shakespeare's plays. In 1833, however, Poe did win a prize of \$50 for his story, "MS. Found in a Bottle," in a contest held by the Baltimore *Saturday Visiter*, and he came near winning with "The Coliseum" at the same time the \$25 prize for the best poem. One of the judges in this contest was John Pendleton Kennedy the novelist, who did what he could to assist Poe. In particular, he recommended Poe to Thomas Willis White, proprietor of the recently founded *Southern Literary Messenger* (1834-1864) in Richmond. Kennedy wrote to White:

"Poe did right in referring to me. He is very clever with his pen—classical and scholar-like. He wants experience and direction, but I have no doubt he can be made very useful to you. And, poor fellow, he is *very* poor. . . . The young fellow is highly imaginative and a little *terrific*. He is at work upon a tragedy [*Politian*], but I have turned him to drudging upon whatever may make money."

In August, 1835, Poe was back in Richmond as editorial assistant on the *Messenger*. (John Allan, who was now dead, had not mentioned Poe in his will, although he had attempted to provide for two illegitimate children.) By the end of the year Poe was practically the editor of the *Messenger*, which was then, owing largely to his efforts, the best literary magazine the South has ever had. At one time he was earning \$1000, which is probably more than he received from any of his later magazine connections. In the *Messenger* Poe published or republished a large number of his own poems and tales; but it was chiefly by his book reviews (one wonders where he had done his 'prentice work as a reviewer) that he attracted wide attention to the new magazine and greatly increased its subscription list. Unlike many other critics, Poe did not regard it as his business to praise every American author who wrote a book dealing with American materials. For him literature was an international matter, and what he wished to see was literature of high quality, no matter what materials it dealt with. He had read the British quarterlies to some purpose; and, regarding it as the critic's business to chastise literary pretenders, he could on occasion write reviews as savage as those of Lockhart, Gifford, or Jeffrey.

Poe developed quickly into an expert magazinist. His occasional drinking, however, did not please the owner of the *Messenger*, and it probably had something to do with Poe's leaving Richmond early in 1837. But he had never had a wholly free hand with the magazine. White knew that Poe was thoroughly competent, but, after all, the *Messenger* belonged to him and he wanted it run to suit himself. Poe, watching the magazine become profitable and seeing the profits go into White's pockets, felt that in New York he would fare better. Already, if we may accept as accurate what he wrote to Charles Anthon in June, 1844, he had evolved a plan for a magazine of his own:

"Before quitting the 'Messenger' I saw, or fancied I saw, through a long and dim vista, the brilliant field for ambition which a Magazine of bold and noble aims presented to him who should successfully establish it in America. I perceived that the country, from its very constitution, could not fail of affording in a few years a larger proportionate amount of readers than any upon the earth. I perceived that the whole energetic, busy spirit of the age tended wholly to Magazine literature—to the curt, the terse, the well-timed, and the readily diffused, in preference to the old forms of the verbose and ponderous and the inaccessible. I knew from personal experience that lying *perdu* among the innumerable plantations in our vast Southern and Western countries were a host of well-educated men peculiarly devoid of prejudice, who would gladly lend their influence to a really vigorous journal, provided the right means were taken of bringing it fairly within the very limited scope of their observation."

Poe, we have neglected to state, had already married his cousin, Virginia Clemm. Mrs. Clemm was a member of the Poe household until his death. She, rather than the childlike Virginia, is the heroine of the Poe story. Her practical sense and unswerving devotion kept Poe out of many difficulties.

In New York, whither Poe went in 1837—the year of a memorable financial depression—he did not find the position he expected on the *New York Review*. In 1838 he moved to Philadelphia, where he was to live for six years—a period in which he produced much of his best work, especially in prose. Philadelphia had at that time few important writers, but it was a periodical center. For about two years of the six Poe helped to edit *Burton's Gentleman's Maga-*

zine, and *Graham's Magazine* after it had absorbed *Burton's*. *Graham's* was the best of the more popular magazines before the Civil War, and while Poe was connected with it, its circulation grew rapidly. Poe, however, got very tired of it and resigned to be succeeded by his future biographer and editor, the Rev. Rufus Wilmot Griswold. On May 25, 1842, Poe wrote to F. W. Thomas: "My reason for resigning was disgust with the namby-pamby character of the Magazine—a character which it was impossible to eradicate. I allude to the contemptible pictures, fashion-plates, music, and love-tales." Poe had expected Graham to help him to establish his own magazine, the *Penn*, or, as he later called it, the *Stylus*; but Graham, making money out of his own magazine, had no notion of founding a less popular and less profitable one. Four years later Poe wrote to Philip Pendleton Cooke: "Touching 'The Stylus':—this is the one great purpose of my literary life. . . . I wish to establish a journal in which men of genius may fight their battles, upon some terms of equality, with those dunces the men of talent." Had Poe been able to find as partner a man of means to work with him and supplement his editorial talents with capital and business acumen, the projected magazine might have become as notable as the *Atlantic Monthly* (1857-) became under Lowell some years later. Although *Graham's* and *Godey's Lady's Book*, to which Poe contributed, were the best-paying magazines of the period, he found it difficult to eke out a living. Graham paid him four or five dollars a page, while the almost forgotten N. P. Willis—the best-paid magazine writer of the time—was getting eleven. Frank Luther Mott calculates that in the year 1843, during which Poe was not an editor, he derived from his magazine contributions only about \$300. Graham regarded Poe as an excellent contributor but not an especially popular one. After Poe's death he wrote in his "Defence of Poe," a reply to Griswold:

"The character of Poe's mind was of such an order as not to be very widely in demand. The class of educated mind which he could readily and profitably address was small—the channels through which he could do so at all were few—and publishers all, or nearly all, contented with such pens as were already engaged, hesitated to incur the expense of his to an extent which would sufficiently remunerate him; hence, when he was fairly at sea, connected permanently with no publication, he suffered all the horrors of prospective destitution, with scarcely the ability of providing for immediate necessities; . . ."

In the spring of 1844 Poe moved to New York, where he was to live the remaining five years of his life. For a time he held a minor editorial position on N. P. Willis's *Evening Mirror*, which in January, 1845, published "The Raven," the first of Poe's poems to attract wide attention. Later in the year he became one of the editors of the *Broadway Journal* and finally for a brief period editor and proprietor, but in spite of his frantic borrowing of money, the declining magazine died on his hands.

The remainder of Poe's life is sad. Much of the time he was ill, and Virginia was slowly dying. In the summer of 1846 they moved to a cottage at Fordham (now in the Bronx), where Poe was deeply mortified to learn that a public appeal to charity was being made in their behalf. In January, 1847, Virginia died. Poe was again ill, and from this time on his drinking grew worse. His later published letters show him almost hysterically eager for feminine sympathy. Elizabeth Oakes Smith (Mrs. Seba Smith), who knew him in these years, wrote after his death: "Men, such as Edgar Poe, will always have an ideal of themselves by which they represent the chivalry of a Bayard and the heroism of a Viking, when, in fact, they are utterly dependent and tor-

mented with womanish sensibilities." After a visit to Richmond in 1849, in the course of which he became re-engaged to Sarah Elmira Royster, now a widow, Poe set out for New York. He died in Baltimore on his way north. The exact circumstances will probably never be known, but it seems probable that illness and delirium were brought on by drinking. He died on October 7, 1849, at the age of forty.

Two days after Poe's death, Griswold published under the signature of "Ludwig" an article in the New York *Tribune* beginning:

"Edgar Allan Poe is dead. He died in Baltimore the day before yesterday This announcement will startle many, *but few will be grieved by it.* The poet was well known personally or by reputation, in all this country, he had readers in England, and in several of the states of Continental Europe; *but he had few or no friends*; and the regret for his death will be suggested principally by the consideration that in him literary art lost one of its most brilliant, but erratic stars."

Griswold was the first editor of Poe's works. The memoir of Poe which he included greatly displeased Mrs. Clemm, for whose benefit the edition was published. For a long time Griswold's prejudiced account of Poe was the only one available. Griswold's editing of Poe's works was competent by the standards of the time. "It was as biographer, not as editor," remarks Killis Campbell, "that Griswold sinned against Poe." Miss Joy Bayless's *Rufus Wilmot Griswold* (1943) takes a somewhat more favorable attitude toward Poe's literary executor.

The Providence poetess, Mrs. Sarah Helen Whitman, to whom Poe was once engaged, issued in 1860 her defense, *Edgar Poe and His Critics*. Not until 1880, when the Englishman, J. H. Ingram, published his life of Poe, was there anything like a real biography. The best life is Arthur Hobson Quinn, *Edgar Allan Poe: A Critical Biography* (1941); but two earlier biographies of importance are: George E. Woodberry, *The Life of Edgar Allan Poe* (1885; expanded to two volumes in 1909), and Heivey Allen, *Israfel: The Life and Times of Edgar Allan Poe* (1926; revised edition, 1935). Certain special works are: B. A. Booth and C. E. Jones, *A Concordance to the Poetical Works of Edgar Allan Poe* (1941); C. P. Cambiaire, *The Influence of Edgar Allan Poe in France* (1927); Killis Campbell, *The Mind of Poe and Other Studies* (1933); Norman Foerster, *American Criticism* (1928); Napier Wilt, "Poe's Attitude toward His Tales," *Modern Philology*, XXV, 101-105 (August, 1927); Edward Hungerford, "Poe and Phrenology," *American Literature*, II, 209-231 (November, 1930); David K. Jackson, *Poe and The Southern Literary Messenger* (1934); Floyd Stovall, "Poe's Debt to Coleridge," *University of Texas Studies in English*, X, 70-127; and George E. DeMille, *Literary Criticism in America* (1931). Still of value are the essays in E. C. Stedman, *Poets of America* (1898) and J. M. Robertson, *New Essays towards a Critical Method* (1897), both of which are more favorable than the essay in W. C. Brownell, *American Prose Masters* (1909). The best edition of Poe's writings is the Virginia Edition edited by James A. Harrison (1902), now unfortunately out of print. The second volume of Harrison's biography is made up of letters by or about Poe. The most nearly complete edition available is that of Stedman and Woodberry (10 vols., 1894-1895). See also *The Complete Poems and Stories of Edgar Allan Poe* (1946) edited by A. H. Quinn and E. H. O'Neill. There is an excellent one-volume edition of the tales, edited by Killis Campbell (1927), in the American Authors Series. Excellent editions of the poems are those of Killis Campbell (1917) and Thomas Ollive Mabbott (1928). The notes in Campbell's edition are indispensable. A good working bibliography appears in Margaret Alterton and Hardin Craig (eds.), *Edgar*

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Allan Poe: Representative Selections (1935). See also Lewis Leary (ed.), *Articles on American Literature . . .* (1947).

Poe's personality has impressed itself upon the popular imagination more than that of any other American writer. For the masses, he has all too often represented genius without character. For American writers since his death, he has often been a symbol of the artist struggling against a hostile world, the victim of philistinism. Among those who have written poems about him are Richard Henry Stoddard, Sarah Helen Whitman, Thomas Holley Chivers, Walter Malone, John Banister Tabb, Edwin Markham, DuBose Heyward, Karl Shapiro, and Vachel Lindsay. Lindsay's "The Wizard in the Street" is given in the second volume of this book. We include here a tribute by the North Carolina poet, John Henry Boner (1845-1903).

POE'S COTTAGE AT FORDHAM*

*Here lived the soul enchanted
By melody of song;
Here dwelt the spirit haunted
By a demoniac throng;
Here sang the lips elated;
Here grief and death were sated;
Here loved and here unmated
Was he, so frail, so strong.*

*Here wintry winds and cheerless
The dying firelight blew,
While he whose song was peerless
Dreamed the drear midnight through,
And from dull embers chilling
Crept shadows darkly filling
The silent place, and thrilling
His fancy as they grew.*

*Here, with brow bared to heaven,
In starry night he stood,
With the lost star of seven
Feeling sad brotherhood.
Here in the sobbing showers
Of dark autumnal hours
He heard suspected powers
Shriek through the stormy wood.*

*From visions of Apollo
And of Astarte's bliss,*

*He gazed into the hollow
And hopeless vale of Dis,
And though earth were surrounded
By heaven, it still was mounded
With graves. His soul had sounded
The dolorous abyss.*

*Proud, mad, but not defiant,
He touched at heaven and hell.
Fate found a rare soul phant
And rung her changes well.
Alternately his lyre,
Stranded with strings of fire,
Led earth's most happy choir,
Or flashed with Israel.*

*No singer of old story
Luting accustomed lays,
No harper for new glory,
No mendicant for praise,
He struck high chords and splendid,
Wherein were fiercely blended
Tones that unfinished ended
With his unfinished days.*

*Here through this lowly portal,
Made sacred by his name,
Unheralded immortal
The mortal went and came.
And fate that then denied him,
And envy that decried him,
And malice that belied him,
Have cenotaphed his fame.*

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LETTERS

TO MRS. MARIA CLEMM*

This fragmentary letter was written just after Poe and Virginia had moved from Philadelphia to New York.

NEW YORK, *Sunday Morning*,
April 7, [1844] just after breakfast.

MY DEAR MUDDY,—We have just this minute done breakfast, and I now sit down to write you about everything. I can't pay for the letter, because the P. O. won't be open to-day.—In the first place, we arrived safe at Walnut St. wharf. The driver wanted to make me pay a dollar, but I wouldn't. Then I had to pay a boy a levy to put the trunks in the baggage car. In the meantime I took Sis [Mrs. Poe] in the Dépôt Hotel. It was only a quarter past 6, and we had to wait till 7. We saw the Ledger & Times—nothing in either—a few words of no account in the Chronicle.—We started in good spirits, but did not get here until nearly 3 o'clock. We went in the cars to Amboy about 40 miles from N. York, and then took the steamboat the rest of the way.—Sissy coughed none at all. When we got to the wharf it was raining hard. I left her on board the boat, after putting the trunks in the Ladies' Cabin, and set off to buy an umbrella and look for a boarding-house. I met a man selling umbrellas and bought one for 62 cents. Then I went up Greenwich St. and soon found a boarding-house. It is just before you get to Cedar St. on the West side going up the left hand side. It has brown stone steps with a porch with brown pillars. "Morrison" is the name on the door. I made a bargain in a few minutes and then got a hack and went for Sis. I was not gone more than 1/2 an hour, and she was quite astonished to see me back so soon. She didn't expect me for an hour. There were 2 other ladies waiting on board—so she wasn't very lonely.—When we got to the house we had to wait about 1/2 an hour before the room was ready. The house is old & looks buggy.

... , taking into consideration the central situation and the *living*. I wish Kate¹ could see it—she would faint. Last night, for supper, we had the nicest tea you ever drank, strong & hot—wheat bread & rye bread—cheese—tea-cakes (elegant) a great dish (2 dishes) of elegant ham, and 2 of cold veal, piled up like a mountain and large slices—3 dishes of the cakes, and every thing in the greatest profusion. No fear of starving here The landlady seemed as if she couldn't press us enough, and we were at home directly. Her husband is living with her—a fat good-natured old soul. There are 8 or 10 boarders—2 or 3 of them ladies—2 servants.—For breakfast we had excellent-flavored coffee, hot & strong—not very clear & no great deal of cream—veal cutlets, elegant ham & eggs & nice bread and butter. I never sat down to a more plentiful or a nicer breakfast. I wish you could have seen the eggs—and the great dish of meat. I ate the first hearty breakfast I have eaten since we left our little home. Sis is delighted, and we are both in excellent spirits. She has coughed hardly any and had no night sweat. She is now busy mending my pants which I tore against a nail. I went out last night and bought a skein of silk, a skein of thread, 2 buttons, a pair of slippers & a tin pan for the stove. The fire kept in all night—We have now got \$4 and a half left. Tomorrow I am going to try & borrow \$3—so that I may have a fortnight to go upon. I feel in excellent spirits & haven't drunk a drop—so that I hope to get out of trouble. The very instant I scrape together enough money I will send it on. You can't imagine how much we both do miss you. Sissy had a hearty cry last night, because you and Catterina weren't here. We are resolved to get 2 rooms the first moment we can. In the meantime it is impossible we could be more comfortable or more at home than we are. It looks as if it was going to clear up now.—Be sure and go to the P. O. & have my letters forwarded. As soon as I write Lowell's article, I will send it to you, & get you to get the money from Graham. Give our best love to C.

.

* Reprinted by permission of the Thomas Y. Crowell Company, from James A. Harrison, *Life and Letters of Edgar Allan Poe*.

Be sure & take home the Messenger.
We hope to send for you *very* soon.

¹ Kate, or Catterina, is the cat.

TO JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL*

While preparing an article on Poe's writings for the "Our Contributors" series running in *Graham's Magazine*, Lowell wrote to Poe: "I wish you would (if you can) write me a letter giving me in some sort a spiritual autobiography of yourself. . . . I want *your own estimate* of your life." Although Poe clearly overrates his own indolence, the letter is a significant document. The philosophical speculations are condensed from "Mesmeric Revelation," which Poe was about to publish in the *Columbian Magazine*.

NEW YORK, July 2, '44.

MY DEAR MR. LOWELL,—I can feel for the "constitutional indolence" of which you complain—for it is one of my own besetting sins. I am excessively slothful and wonderfully industrious—by fits There are epochs when any kind of mental exercise is torture, and when nothing yields me pleasure but solitary communion with the "mountains and the woods,"—the "altars" of Byron. I have thus rambled and dreamed away whole months, and awake, at last, to a sort of mania for composition. Then I scribble all day, and read all night, so long as the disease endures. This is also the temperament of P. P. Cooke, of Virginia, the author of "Florence Vane," "Young Rosalie Lee," and some other sweet poems—and I should not be surprised if it were your own. Cooke writes and thinks as you—and I have been told that you resemble him personally.

I am *not* ambitious—unless negatively. I now and then feel stirred up to excel a fool, merely because I hate to let a fool imagine that he may excel me. Beyond this I feel nothing of ambition. I really perceive that vanity about which most men merely prate,—the vanity of the human or temporal life. I live continually in a reverie of the future. I have no faith in human perfectibility. I think that human exertion will have no appreciable effect upon humanity. Man is now only more active—not more happy—nor more wise, than he was 6000 years ago. The result will never vary—and to suppose that it will, is to suppose that the foregone man has lived in vain—that the foregone time is but the rudiment of the future—that the myriads who have perished have not been upon equal footing with ourselves—nor are we with our posterity. I cannot agree to lose sight of man the individual in man

the mass.—I have no belief in spirituality. I think the word a *mere* word. No one has really a conception of spirit. We cannot imagine what is not. We deceive ourselves by the idea of infinite rarefied matter. Matter escapes the senses by degrees—a stone—a metal—a liquid—the atmosphere—a gas—the luminiferous ether. Beyond this there are other modifications more rare. But to all we attach the notion of a constitution of particles—atomic composition. For this reason only we think spirit different; for spirit, we say, is unparticled, and *therefore* is not matter. But it is clear that if we proceed sufficiently far in our ideas of rarefaction, we shall arrive at a point where the particles coalesce; for, although the particles be infinite, the infinity of littleness in the spaces between them is an absurdity.—The unparticled matter, permeating and impelling all things, is God. Its activity is the thought of God—which creates. Man, and other thinking beings, are individualizations of the unparticled matter. Matter exists as a "person," by being clothed with matter (the particled matter) which individualizes him. Thus habited, his life is rudimental. What we call "death" is the painful metamorphosis. The stars are the habitations of rudimental beings. But for the necessity of the rudimental life, there would have been no worlds. At death, the worm is the butterfly—still material, but of a matter unrecognized by our organs—recognized occasionally, perhaps, by the sleep-walker directly—without organs—through the mesmeric medium. Thus a sleep-walker may see ghosts. Divested of the rudimental covering, the being inhabits *space*,—what we suppose to be the immaterial universe,—passing everywhere, and acting all things, by mere volition, cognizant of all secrets but that of the nature of God's volition,—the motion, or activity, of the unparticled matter.

You speak of "an estimate of my life,"—and, from what I have already said, you will see that I have none to give. I have been too deeply conscious of the mutability and evanescence of temporal things to give any continuous effort to anything—to be consistent in anything. My life has been *whim*—impulse—passion—a longing for solitude—a scorn of all things present, in an earnest desire for the future.

I am profoundly excited by music, and by some poems,—those of Tennyson especially—whom, with Keats, Shelley, Coleridge (occa-

* Reprinted from George E. Woodberry, *The Life of Edgar Allan Poe* (1909), by permission of Mrs. Charles D. Woodberry.

sionally), and a few others of like thought and expression, I regard as the *sole* poets. Music is the perfection of the soul, or idea, of Poetry. The *vagueness* of exaltation aroused by a sweet air (which should be strictly indefinite and never too strongly suggestive) is precisely what we should aim at in poetry. Affectation, within bounds, is thus no blemish.

I have been so negligent as not to preserve copies of any of my volumes of poems—nor was either worthy of preservation. The best passages were culled in Hirst's article. I think my best poems "The Sleeper," "The Conqueror Worm," "The Haunted Palace," "Lenore," "Dreamland," and the "Coliseum,"—but all have been hurried and unconsidered. My best tales are "Ligeia," the "Gold-Bug," the "Murders in the Rue Morgue," "The Fall of the House of Usher," the "Telltale Heart," the "Black Cat," "William Wilson," and "The Descent into the Maelström." "The Purloined Letter," forthcoming in the "Gift," is perhaps the best of my tales of ratiocination. I have lately written for Godey "The Oblong Box" and "Thou Art the Man,"—as yet unpublished. With this I mail you the "Gold-Bug," which is the only one of my tales I have on hand. - - -

Believe me your true friend,

E. A. POE.

from MARGINALIA

Poe's "Marginalia," published in various magazines during the last six years of his life, consist chiefly of comments on books he had read. Many of them are of slight importance; but others, though often overlooked, throw light on his character and his literary aims.

It is the curse of a certain order of mind, that it can never rest satisfied with the consciousness of its ability to do a thing. Still less is it content with doing it. It must both know and show how it was done.

.

Some Frenchman—possibly Montaigne—says: "People talk about thinking, but for my part I never think, except when I sit down to write." It is this never thinking, unless when we sit down to write, which is the cause of so much indifferent composition. But perhaps there is something more involved in the Frenchman's ob-

servation than meets the eye. It is certain that the mere act of inditing, tends, in a great degree, to the logicalizing of thought. Whenever, on account of its vagueness, I am dissatisfied with a conception of the brain, I resort forthwith to the pen, for the purpose of obtaining, through its aid, the necessary form, consequence and precision.

How very commonly we hear it remarked, that such and such thoughts are beyond the compass of words! I do not believe that any thought, properly so called, is out of the reach of language. I fancy, rather, that where difficulty in expression is experienced, there is, in the intellect which experiences it, a want either of deliberateness or of method. For my own part, I have never had a thought which I could not set down in words, with even more distinctness than that with which I conceived it:—as I have before observed, the thought is logicalized by the effort at (written) expression.

There is, however, a class of fancies, of exquisite delicacy, which are *not* thoughts, and to which, *as yet*, I have found it absolutely impossible to adapt language. I use the word *fancies* at random, and merely because I must use *some* word; but the idea commonly attached to the term is not even remotely applicable to the shadows of shadows in question. They seem to me rather psychal than intellectual. They arise in the soul (alas, how rarely!) only at its epochs of most intense tranquility—when the bodily and mental health are in perfection—and at those mere points of time where the confines of the waking world blend with those of the world of dreams. I am aware of these "fancies" only when I am on the very brink of sleep, with the consciousness that I am so. I have satisfied myself that this condition exists but for an inappreciable *point* of time—yet it is crowded with these "shadows of shadows"; and for absolute *thought* there is demanded time's *endurance*.

These "fancies" have in them a pleasurable ecstasy as far beyond the most pleasurable of the world of wakefulness, or of dreams, as the Heaven of the Northman theology is beyond its Hell. I regard the visions, even as they arise, with an awe which, in some measure, moderates or tranquilizes the ecstasy—I so regard them, through a conviction (which seems a portion of the ecstasy itself) that this ecstasy, in itself, is of a character supernal to the Human Nature—is a

glimpse of the spirit's outer world; and I arrive at this conclusion—if this term is at all applicable to instantaneous intuition—by a perception that the delight experienced has, as its element, but *the absoluteness of novelty*. I say the absoluteness—for in these fancies—let me now term them psychal impressions—there is really nothing even approximate in character to impressions ordinarily received. It is as if the five senses were supplanted by five myriad others alien to mortality.

Now, so entire is my faith in the *power of words*, that, at times, I have believed it possible to embody even the evanescence of fancies such as I have attempted to describe. In experiments with this end in view, I have proceeded so far as, first, to control (when the bodily and mental health are good) the existence of the condition:—that is to say, I can now (unless when ill) be sure that the condition will supervene, if I so wish it, at the point of time already described: of its supervention, until lately, I could never be certain, even under the most favorable circumstances. I mean to say, merely, that now I can be sure, when all circumstances are favorable, of the supervention of the condition, and feel even the capacity of inducing or compelling it:—the favorable circumstances, however, are not the less rare—else had I compelled, already, the Heaven into the Earth.

I have proceeded so far, secondly, as to prevent the lapse from *the point* of which I speak—the point of blending between wakefulness and sleep—as to prevent at will, I say, the lapse from this border-ground into the dominion of sleep. Not that I can *continue* the condition—not that I can render the point more than a point—but that I can startle myself from the point into wakefulness—and thus transfer the point itself into the realm of Memory—convey its impressions, or more properly their recollections, to a situation where (although still for a very brief period) I can survey them with the eye of analysis.

For these reasons—that is to say, because I have been enabled to accomplish thus much—I do not altogether despair of embodying in words at least enough of the fancies in question to convey, to certain classes of intellect, a shadowy conception of their character.

In saying this I am not to be understood as supposing that the fancies, or psychal impressions, to which I allude, are confined to my individual self—are not, in a word, common to all

mankind—for on this point it is quite impossible that I should form an opinion—but nothing can be more certain than that even a partial record of the impressions would startle the universal intellect of mankind, by the *supremeness of the novelty* of the material employed, and of its consequent suggestions. In a word—should I ever write a paper on this topic, the world will be compelled to acknowledge that, at last, I have done an original thing.

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The *pure Imagination* chooses, from *either Beauty or Deformity*, only the most combinable things hitherto uncombined, the compound, as a general rule, partaking, in character, of beauty, or sublimity, in the ratio of the respective beauty or sublimity of the things combined—which are themselves still to be considered as atomic—that is to say, as previous combinations. But, as often analogously happens in physical chemistry, so not unfrequently does it occur in this chemistry of the intellect, that the admixture of two elements results in a something that has nothing of the qualities of one of them, or even nothing of the qualities of either. . . . Thus, the range of Imagination is unlimited. Its materials extend throughout the universe. Even out of deformities it fabricates that *Beauty* which is at once its sole object and its inevitable test. But, in general, the richness or force of the matters combined; the facility of discovering combinable novelties worth combining; and, especially the absolute “chemical combination” of the completed mass—are the particulars to be regarded in our estimate of Imagination. It is this thorough harmony of an imaginative work which so often causes it to be undervalued by the thoughtless, through the character of *obviousness* which is superinduced. We are apt to find ourselves asking *why* it is that these combinations have never been imagined before.

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I have sometimes amused myself by endeavoring to fancy what would be the fate of any individual gifted, or rather accursed, with an intellect *very* far superior to that of his race. Of course, he would be conscious of his superiority; nor could he (if otherwise constituted as man is) help manifesting his consciousness. Thus

he would make himself enemies at all points. And since his opinions and speculations would widely differ from those of *all* mankind—that he would be considered a madman, is evident. How horribly painful such a condition! Hell could invent no greater torture than of being charged with abnormal weakness on account of being abnormally strong.

In like manner, nothing can be clearer than that a *very* generous spirit—*truly* feeling what all merely profess—must inevitably find itself misconceived in every direction—its motives misinterpreted. Just as extremeness of intelligence would be thought fatuity, so excess of chivalry could not fail of being looked upon as meanness in its last degree—and so on with other virtues. This subject is a painful one indeed. That individuals *have* so soared above the plane of their race, is scarcely to be questioned; but, in looking back through history for traces of their existence, we should pass over all biographies of “the good and the great,” while we search carefully the slight records of wretches who died in prison, in Bedlam, or upon the gallows.

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An infinity of error makes its way into our Philosophy, through Man's habit of considering himself a citizen of a world solely—of an individual planet—instead of at least occasionally contemplating his position as cosmopolite proper—as a denizen of the universe.

from “A CHAPTER OF SUGGESTIONS”
(1845)

In the life of every man there occurs at least one epoch when the spirit seems to abandon, for a brief period, the body, and, elevating itself above mortal affairs just so far as to get a comprehensive and *general* view, makes thus an estimate of its humanity, as accurate as is possible, under any circumstances, to that particular spirit. The soul here separates itself from its own idiosyncrasy, or individuality, and considers its own being, not as appertaining solely to itself, but as a portion of the universal Ens.¹ All the important good resolutions which we keep—all startling, marked regenerations of character—are brought about at these *crises* of life. And thus

¹ Being.

it is our *sense of self* which debases, and which keeps us debased.

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That the imagination has not been unjustly ranked as supreme among the mental faculties, appears from the intense consciousness, on the part of the imaginative man, that the faculty in question brings his soul often to a glimpse of things supernal and eternal—to the very verge of the *great secrets*. There are moments, indeed, in which he perceives the faint perfumes, and hears the melodies of a happier world. Some of the most profound knowledge—perhaps all *very* profound knowledge—has originated from a highly stimulated imagination. Great intellects *guess* well. The laws of Kepler were, professedly, *guesses*.

from HAWTHORNE'S TWICE TOLD
TALES
(1842)

The second and enlarged edition of Hawthorne's *Twice Told Tales* occasioned Poe's well-known comments on the principles underlying the short story. The parts omitted below deal chiefly with stories and essays that are not represented in this anthology. Compare Poe's conception with that of Iving. Note that Poe's doctrine of the single effect is applicable to his poems as well as to his stories. Note also other words which he uses as practically synonymous with “effect”: “idea,” “impression,” “thesis,” “picture.” It is not easy to find a single definite “effect” in Poe's earliest stories; but in the stories here represented the “effect” is quite definite; in fact, Poe often uses in his opening paragraph one or more phrases (such as “the redness and the horror of blood” in “The Masque of the Red Death”) which indicate clearly the particular “effect” of the story.

Poe's theory of the short story seems to have made little impression on his contemporaries. It was not until forty years later that Brander Matthews resurrected and amplified Poe's theory in “The Philosophy of the Short-story.” Contemporary writers of fiction, in revolt against the well-made short story, sometimes blame Poe for what was hardly his fault. In an article on “The Short Story,” published in the *Saturday Review of Literature* for November 19, 1927, Ruth Suckow writes:

“I admit a preference but not a theory. It seems unprofitable to me to attack one type of short story for the benefit of another. It is definition and formulæ themselves that I deny: the generalization of the

specific The definition formulated by Mr Edgar Allan Poe defined a short story very well—the special kind of short story, of course, which he himself was bent upon writing The trouble came when it was utilized to define *the* short story. As soon as any *a* is inflated into a *the* it becomes a menace to art The doctrine of The Short Story has had, does have, a blighting influence upon the production of short stories in America.”

But it is of his [Hawthorne's] tales that we desire principally to speak. The tale proper, in our opinion, affords unquestionably the fairest field for the exercise of the loftiest talent, which can be afforded by the wide domains of mere prose. Were we bidden to say how the highest genius could be most advantageously employed for the best display of its own powers, we should answer, without hesitation—in the composition of a rimed poem, not to exceed in length what might be perused in an hour Within this limit alone can the highest order of true poetry exist. We need only here say, upon this topic, that, in almost all classes of composition, the unity of effect or impression is a point of the greatest importance. It is clear, moreover, that this unity cannot be thoroughly preserved in productions whose perusal cannot be completed at one sitting. We may continue the reading of a prose composition, from the very nature of prose itself, much longer than we can persevere, to any good purpose, in the perusal of a poem. This latter, if truly fulfilling the demands of the poetic sentiment, induces an exaltation of the soul which cannot be long sustained. All high excitements are necessarily transient. Thus a long poem is a paradox. And, without unity of impression, the deepest effects cannot be brought about. Epics were the offspring of an imperfect sense of Art, and their reign is no more. A poem too brief may produce a vivid, but never an intense or enduring impression. Without a certain continuity of effort—without a certain duration or repetition of purpose—the soul is never deeply moved. There must be the dropping of the water on the rock. De Béranger¹ has wrought brilliant things—pungent and spirit-stirring—but, like all immassive bodies, they lack *momentum*, and thus fail to satisfy Poetic Sentiment. They sparkle and excite, but, from want of continuity, fail deeply to impress. Extreme brevity will degenerate into

¹ A French lyric poet (1780-1857), author of the motto of “The Fall of the House of Usher.”

epigrammatism; but the sin of extreme length is even more unpardonable. *In medio tutissimus ibis.*²

Were we called upon, however, to designate that class of composition which, next to such a poem as we have suggested, should best fulfil the demands of high genius—should offer it the most advantageous field of exertion—we should unhesitatingly speak of the prose tale, as Mr. Hawthorne has here exemplified it. We allude to the short prose narrative, requiring from a half-hour to one or two hours in its perusal. The ordinary novel is objectionable, from its length, for reasons already stated in substance. As it cannot be read at one sitting, it deprives itself, of course, of the immense force derivable from *totality*. Worldly interests intervening during the pauses of perusal, modify, annul, or counteract, in a greater or less degree, the impressions of the book. But simple cessation in reading, would, of itself, be sufficient to destroy the true unity. In the brief tale, however, the author is enabled to carry out the fullness of his intention, be it what it may. During the hour of perusal the soul of the reader is at the writer's control. There are no external or extrinsic influences—resulting from weariness or interruption.

A skilful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents: but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single effect to be wrought out, he then invents such incidents—he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this pre-conceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one preëstablished design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at length painted which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction. The idea of the tale has been presented unblemished, because undisturbed; and this is an end unattainable by the novel. Undue brevity is just as exceptionable here as in the poem; but undue length is yet more to be avoided.

We have said that the tale has a point of superiority even over the poem. In fact, while

² You will go most safely in the middle course.

the *rhythm* of this latter is an essential aid in the development of the poet's highest idea—the idea of the Beautiful—the artificialities of this rhythm are an inseparable bar to the development of all points of thought or expression which have their basis in *Truth*. But Truth is often, and in very great degree, the aim of the tale. Some of the finest tales are tales of ratiocination. Thus the field of this species of composition, if not in so elevated a region on the mountain of Mind, is a table-land of far vaster extent than the domain of the mere poem. Its products are never so rich, but infinitely more numerous, and more appreciable by the mass of mankind. The writer of the prose tale, in short, may bring to his theme a vast variety of modes or inflections of thought and expression—(the ratiocinative for example, the sarcastic, or the humorous) which are not only antagonistical to the nature of the poem, but absolutely forbidden by one of its most peculiar and indispensable adjuncts; we allude, of course, to rhythm. It may be added here, *par parenthèse*, that the author who aims at the purely beautiful in a prose tale is laboring at great disadvantage. For Beauty can be better treated in the poem. Not so with terror, or passion, or horror, or a multitude of such other points. And here it will be seen how full of prejudice are the usual animadversions against those *tales of effect*, many fine examples of which were found in the earlier numbers of Blackwood. The impressions produced were wrought in a legitimate sphere of action, and constituted a legitimate although sometimes an exaggerated interest. They were relished by every man of genius: although there were found many men of genius who condemned them without just ground. The true critic will but demand that the design intended be accomplished, to the fullest extent, by the means most advantageously applicable. - - -

SILENCE—A FABLE

(1838)

In Poe's earliest stories it is not easy to put one's finger on the precise "effect" (if there is one) at which he aimed. "Silence" is one of the earliest in which a quite definite "effect" or "impression" can be pointed out. It is, however, not so much a short story as a prose poem; and it is worthy of a place along with De Quincey's impassioned prose pieces. The poem should be compared with Poe's "Sonnet—

Silence." Note the following passage in his early "Al Aaraaf":

*"Ours is a world of words: Quiet we call
'Silence'—which is the merest word of all."*

- 5 The sketch, like his "The City in the Sea," is somewhat reminiscent of Byron's "Darkness," as the following lines indicate.

*"The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
And nothing stirred within their silent depths,
10 Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
And their masts fell down piecemeal, as they dropped
They slept on the abyss without a surge—
The waves were dead, the tides were in their grave,
The Moon, then mistress, had expired before
15 The winds were withered in the stagnant air,
And the clouds perished."*

The concluding paragraph seems tinged with the element of burlesque which is common in Poe's earlier stories.

- 20 Ἐξδουσιν δ' ὀρέων κορυφαί τε καὶ φάραγγες
Πρώονες τε καὶ χαράδραι. ALCMAN

The mountain pinnacles slumber; valleys, clogs,
and caves are silent.

- 25 "Listen to *me*," said the Demon, as he placed his hand upon my head. "The region of which I speak is a dreary region in Libya, by the borders of the river Zaire. And there is not quiet there, nor silence.

- 30 "The waters of the river have a saffron and sickly hue; and they flow not onwards to the sea, but palpitate forever and forever beneath the red eye of the sun with a tumultuous and convulsive motion. For many miles on either side of the river's oozy bed is a pale desert of gigantic water-lilies. They sigh one unto the other in that solitude, and stretch towards the heaven their long and ghastly necks, and nod to and fro their everlasting heads. And there is an indistinct murmur which cometh out from among them like the rushing of subterrene water. And they sigh one unto the other.

- 40 "But there is a boundary to their realm—the boundary of the dark, horrible, lofty forest. There, like the waves about the Hebrides, the low underwood is agitated continually. But there is no wind throughout the heaven. And the tall primeval trees rock eternally hither and thither with a crashing and mighty sound. And from their high summits, one by one, drop everlasting dews. And at the roots strange poisonous flowers lie writhing in perturbed slumber. And overhead, with a rustling and loud noise, the gray clouds

rush westwardly forever, until they roll, a cataract, over the fiery wall of the horizon. But there is no wind throughout the heaven. And by the shores of the river Zaire there is neither quiet nor silence.

"It was night, and the rain fell; and, falling, it was rain, but, having fallen, it was blood And I stood in the morass among the tall lilies, and the rain fell upon my head—and the lilies sighed one unto the other in the solemnity of their desolation.

"And, all at once, the moon arose through the thin ghastly mist, and was crimson in color. And mine eyes fell upon a huge gray rock which stood by the shore of the river, and was lighted by the light of the moon. And the rock was gray, and ghastly, and tall,—and the rock was gray. Upon its front were characters engraven in the stone; and I walked through the morass of water-lilies, until I came close unto the shore, that I might read the characters upon the stone. But I could not decypher them. And I was going back into the morass, when the moon shone with a fuller red, and I turned and looked again upon the rock, and upon the characters;—and the characters were DESOLATION.

"And I looked upwards, and there stood a man upon the summit of the rock; and I hid myself among the water-lilies that I might discover the actions of the man. And the man was tall and stately in form, and was wrapped up from his shoulders to his feet in the toga of old Rome. And the outlines of his figure were indistinct—but his features were the features of a deity; for the mantle of the night, and of the mist, and of the moon, and of the dew, had left uncovered the features of his face. And his brow was lofty with thought, and his eye wild with care; and in the few furrows upon his cheek I read the fables of sorrow, and weariness, and disgust with mankind, and a longing after solitude.

"And the man sat upon the rock, and leaned his head upon his hand, and looked out upon the desolation. He looked down into the low unquiet shrubbery, and up into the tall primeval trees, and up higher at the rustling heaven, and into the crimson moon. And I lay close within shelter of the lilies, and observed the actions of the man. And the man trembled in the solitude;—but the night waned, and he sat upon the rock.

"And the man turned his attention from the

heaven, and looked out upon the dreary river Zaire, and upon the yellow ghastly waters, and upon the pale legions of the water-lilies And the man listened to the sighs of the water-lilies, and to the murmur that came up from among them And I lay close within my covert and observed the actions of the man. And the man trembled in the solitude;—but the night waned and he sat upon the rock.

"Then I went down into the recesses of the morass, and waded afar in among the wilderness of the lilies, and called unto the hippopotami which dwelt among the fens in the recesses of the morass. And the hippopotami heard my call, and came, with the behemoth, unto the foot of the rock, and roared loudly and fearfully beneath the moon. And I lay close within my covert and observed the actions of the man. And the man trembled in the solitude;—but the night waned, and he sat upon the rock.

"Then I cursed the elements with the curse of tumult; and a frightful tempest gathered in the heaven where, before, there had been no wind. And the heaven became livid with the violence of the tempest—and the rain beat upon the head of the man—and the floods of the river came down—and the river was tormented into foam—and the water-lilies shrieked within their beds—and the forest crumbled before the wind—and the thunder rolled—and the lightning fell—and the rock rocked to its foundation. And I lay close within my covert and observed the actions of the man. And the man trembled in the solitude;—but the night waned, and he sat upon the rock.

"Then I grew angry and cursed, with the curse of *silence*, the river, and the lilies, and the wind, and the forest, and the heaven, and the thunder, and the sighs of the water-lilies. And they became accursed, and *were still*. And the moon ceased to totter up its pathway to heaven—and the thunder died away—and the lightning did not flash—and the clouds hung motionless—and the waters sunk to their level and remained—and the trees ceased to rock—and the water-lilies sighed no more—and the murmur was heard no longer from among them, nor any shadow of sound throughout the vast illimitable desert. And I looked upon the characters of the rock, and they were changed;—and the characters were SILENCE.

"And mine eyes fell upon the countenance of the man, and his countenance was wan with

terror. And, hurriedly, he raised his head from his hand, and stood forth upon the rock and listened. But there was no voice throughout the vast illimitable desert, and the characters upon the rock were SILENCE. And the man shuddered, and turned his face away, and fled afar off, in haste, so that I beheld him no more."

Now there are fine tales in the volumes of the Magi—in the iron-bound, melancholy volumes of the Magi. Therein, I say, are glorious histories of the Heaven, and of the Earth, and of the mighty sea—and of the Genii that over-ruled the sea, and the earth, and the lofty heaven. There was much lore too in the sayings which were said by the Sybils; and holy, holy things were heard of old by the dim leaves that trembled around Dodona—but, as Allah liveth, that fable which the Demon told me as he sat by my side in the shadow of the tomb, I hold to be the most wonderful of all! And as the Demon made an end of his story, he fell back within the cavity of the tomb and laughed. And I could not laugh with the Demon, and he cursed me because I could not laugh. And the lynx which dwelleth forever in the tomb, came out therefrom, and lay down at the feet of the Demon, and looked at him steadily in the face.

LIGEIA

(1838)

Twice Poe refers to "Ligeia" as his best tale. The "effect" aimed at in this story is suggested by the motto from Joseph Glanvill. In his *A Manual of the Art of Fiction* (first published under the title *Materials and Methods of Fiction*) Clayton Hamilton has an analysis of "Ligeia" similar to that which Poe made of "The Raven" in "The Philosophy of Composition." Edward Hungerford's "Poe and Phrenology" (*American Literature*, II, 209-231, November, 1930) throws light upon both "Ligeia" and "The Fall of the House of Usher." Ligeia's prominent eyes indicate that the faculty of Language is highly developed. The "gentle prominence of the regions above the temples" refers to Love of Life.

The poem, which has its setting in the story, "The Conqueror Worm," first published in 1843, adds to the effectiveness of the story while the story furnishes an admirable setting for the poem. Professor C. W. Kent calls attention to the fact that the five stanzas of the poem correspond roughly to the five acts of a tragedy.

And the will therein lieth, which dieth not. Who knoweth the mysteries of the will, with its vigor? For God is but a great will pervading all things by nature of its intentness. Man doth not yield himself to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will.—JOSEPH GLANVILL.

I cannot, for my soul, remember how, when, or even precisely where, I first became acquainted with the Lady Ligeia. Long years have since elapsed, and my memory is feeble through much suffering. Or, perhaps, I cannot *now* bring these points to mind, because, in truth, the character of my beloved, her rare learning, her singular yet placid cast of beauty, and the thrilling and enthralling eloquence of her low musical language, made their way into my heart by paces so steadily and stealthily progressive that they have been unnoticed and unknown. Yet I believe that I met her first and most frequently in some large, old, decaying city near the Rhine. Of her family—I have surely heard her speak. That it is of a remotely ancient date cannot be doubted. Ligeia! Ligeia! Buried in studies of a nature more than all else adapted to deaden impressions of the outward world, it is by that sweet word alone—by Ligeia—that I bring before mine eyes in fancy the image of her who is no more. And now, while I write, a recollection flashes upon me that I have *never known* the paternal name of her who was my friend and my betrothed, and who became the partner of my studies, and finally the wife of my bosom. Was it a playful charge on the part of my Ligeia? or was it a test of my strength of affection, that I should institute no inquiries upon this point? or was it rather a caprice of my own—a wildly romantic offering on the shrine of the most passionate devotion? I but indistinctly recall the fact itself—what wonder that I have utterly forgotten the circumstances which originated or attended it? And, indeed, if ever that spirit which is entitled *Romance*—if ever she, the wan and the misty-winged *Ashtophet* of idolatrous Egypt, presided, as they tell, over marriages ill-omened, then most surely she presided over mine.

There is one dear topic, however, on which my memory fails me not. It is the *person* of Ligeia. In stature she was tall, somewhat slender, and, in her latter days, even emaciated. I would in vain attempt to portray the majesty, the quiet ease, of her demeanor, or the incomprehensible

lightness and elasticity of her footfall. She came and departed as a shadow. I was never made aware of her entrance into my closed study save by the dear music of her low sweet voice, as she placed her marble hand upon my shoulder. In beauty of face no maiden ever equalled her. It was the radiance of an opium-dream—an airy and spirit-lifting vision more wildly divine than the fantasies which hovered about the slumbering souls of the daughters of Delos. Yet her features were not of that regular mould which we have been falsely taught to worship in the classical labors of the heathen. "There is no exquisite beauty," says Bacon, Lord Verulam, speaking truly of all the forms and *genera* of beauty, "without some *strangeness* in the proportion."¹ Yet, although I saw that the features of Ligeia were not of a classic regularity—although I perceived that her loveliness was indeed "exquisite," and felt that there was much of "strangeness" pervading it, yet I have tried in vain to detect the irregularity and to trace home my own perception of "the strange." I examined the contour of the lofty and pale forehead: it was faultless—how cold indeed that word when applied to a majesty so divine!—the skin rivalling the purest ivory, the commanding extent and repose, the gentle prominence of the regions above the temples; and then the raven-black, the glossy, the luxuriant and naturally-curling tresses, setting forth the full force of the Homeric epithet, "hyacinthine"! I looked at the delicate outlines of the nose—and nowhere but in the graceful medallions of the Hebrews had I beheld a similar perfection. There were the same luxurious smoothness of surface, the same scarcely perceptible tendency to the aquiline, the same harmoniously curved nostrils speaking the free spirit. I regarded the sweet mouth. Here was indeed the triumph of all things heavenly—the magnificent turn of the short upper lip—the soft, voluptuous slumber of the under—the dimples which sported, and the color which spoke—the teeth glancing back, with a brilliancy almost startling, every ray of the holy light which fell upon them in her serene and placid, yet most exultingly radiant of all smiles. I scrutinized the formation of the chin—and here, too, I found the gentleness of breadth, the softness and the

majesty, the fullness and the spirituality, of the Greek—the contour which the god Apollo revealed but in a dream to Cleomenes, the son of the Athenian. And then I peered into the large eyes of Ligeia.

For eyes we have no models in the remotely antique. It might have been, too, that in these eyes of my beloved lay the secret to which Lord Verulam alludes. They were, I must believe, far larger than the ordinary eyes of our own race. They were even fuller than the fullest of the gazelle eyes of the tribe of the valley of Nour-jahad. Yet it was only at intervals—in moments of intense excitement—that this peculiarity became more than slightly noticeable in Ligeia. And at such moments was her beauty—in my heated fancy thus it appeared perhaps—the beauty of beings either above or apart from the earth, the beauty of the fabulous Houri of the Turk. The hue of the orbs was the most brilliant of black, and, far over them, hung jetty lashes of great length. The brows, slightly irregular in outline, had the same tint. The "strangeness," however, which I found in the eyes, was of a nature distinct from the formation, or the color, or the brilliancy of the features, and must, after all, be referred to the *expression*. Ah, word of no meaning! behind whose vast latitude of mere sound we intrench our ignorance of so much of the spiritual. The expression of the eyes of Ligeia! How for long hours have I pondered upon it! How have I, through the whole of a midsummer night, struggled to fathom it! What was it—that something more profound than the well of Democritus—which lay far within the pupils of my beloved? What *was* it? I was possessed with a passion to discover. Those eyes! those large, those shining, those divine orbs! they became to me twin stars of Leda, and I to them devoutest of astrologers.

There is no point, among the many incomprehensible anomalies of the science of mind, more thrillingly exciting than the fact—never, I believe, noticed in the schools—that, in our endeavors to recall to memory something long forgotten, we often find ourselves *upon the very verge* of remembrance, without being able, in the end, to remember. And thus how frequently, in my intense scrutiny of Ligeia's eyes, have I felt approaching the full knowledge of their expression—felt it approaching—yet not quite be mine—and so at length entirely depart! And

¹ A favorite passage with Poe, and one that throws light upon his conception of art and literature.

(strange, oh strangest mystery of all!) I found, in the commonest objects of the universe, a circle of analogies to that expression. I mean to say that, subsequently to the period when Ligeia's beauty passed into my spirit, there dwelling as in a shrine, I derived, from many existences in the material world, a sentiment such as I felt always aroused within me by her large and luminous orbs. Yet not the more could I define that sentiment, or analyze, or even steadily view it. I recognized it, let me repeat, sometimes in the survey of a rapidly-growing vine—in the contemplation of a moth, a butterfly, a chrysalis, a stream of running water. I have felt it in the ocean; in the falling of a meteor. I have felt it in the glances of unusually aged people And there are one or two stars in heaven—one especially, a star of the sixth magnitude, double and changeable, to be found near the large star in Lyra) in a telescopic scrutiny of which I have been made aware of the feeling. I have been filled with it by certain sounds from stringed instruments, and not unfrequently by passages from books.² Among innumerable other instances, I well remember something in a volume of Joseph Glanvill,³ which (perhaps merely from its quaintness—who shall say?) never failed to inspire me with the sentiment;—"And the will therein lieth, which dieth not. Who knoweth the mysteries of the will, with its vigor? For God is but a great will pervading all things by nature of its intentness. Man doth not yield him to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will."

Length of years and subsequent reflection have enabled me to trace, indeed, some remote connection between this passage in the English moralist and a portion of the character of Ligeia. An *intensity* in thought, action, or speech, was possibly, in her, a result, or at least an index, of that gigantic volition which, during our long intercourse, failed to give other and more immediate evidence of its existence. Of all the women whom I have ever known, she, the outwardly calm, the ever-placid Ligeia, was the most violently a prey to the tumultuous vultures of stern passion. And of such passion I could form no estimate, save by the miraculous expansion

of those eyes which at once so delighted and appalled me—by the almost magical melody, modulation, distinctness, and placidity of her very low voice—and by the fierce energy (rendered doubly effective by contrast with her manner of utterance) of the wild words which she habitually uttered.

I have spoken of the learning of Ligeia: it was immense—such as I have never known in a woman. In the classical tongues was she deeply proficient, and as far as my own acquaintance extended in regard to the modern dialects of Europe, I have never known her at fault. Indeed upon any theme of the most admired, because simply the most abstruse of the boasted erudition of the academy, have I *ever* found Ligeia at fault? How singularly—how thrillingly, this one point in the nature of my wife has forced itself, at this late period only, upon my attention! I said her knowledge was such as I have never known in woman—but where breathes the man who has traversed, and successfully, *all* the wide areas of moral, physical, and methemathical science? I saw not then what I now clearly perceive, that the acquisitions of Ligeia were gigantic, were astounding; yet I was sufficiently aware of her infinite supremacy to resign myself, with a child-like confidence, to her guidance through the chaotic world of metaphysical investigation at which I was most busily occupied during the earlier years of our marriage. With how vast a triumph—with how vivid a delight—with how much of all that is ethereal in hope—did I *feel*, as she bent over me in studies but little sought—but less known—that delicious vista by slow degrees expanding before me, down whose long, gorgeous, and all untrodden path, I might at length pass onward to the goal of a wisdom too divinely precious not to be forbidden!

How poignant, then, must have been the grief with which, after some years, I beheld my well-grounded expectations take wings to themselves and fly away! Without Ligeia I was but as a child groping benighted. Her presence, her readings alone, rendered vividly luminous the many mysteries of the transcendentalism in which we were immersed. Wanting the radiant lustre of her eyes, letters, lambent and golden, grew duller than Saturnian lead. And now those eyes shone less and less frequently upon the pages over which I porcd. Ligeia grew ill. The wild eyes blazed with a too—too glorious effulgence; the

² With this paragraph compare Nesace's Song from "Al Aaraaf," in which another Ligeia appears.

³ Joseph Glanvill (1636-1680) was an English clergyman and philosophical writer.

pale fingers became of the transparent waxen hue of the grave; and the blue veins upon the lofty forehead swelled and sank impetuously with the tides of the most gentle emotion. I saw that she must die—and I struggled desperately in spirit with the grim Azrael. And the struggles of the passionate wife were, to my astonishment, even more energetic than my own. There had been much in her stern nature to impress me with the belief that, to her, death would have come without its terrors;—but not so. Words are impotent to convey any just idea of the fierceness of resistance with which she wrestled with the Shadow. I groaned in anguish at the pitiable spectacle. I would have soothed—I would have reasoned; but, in the intensity of her wild desire for life,—for life—but for life—solace and reason were alike the uttermost of folly. Yet not until the last instance, amid the most convulsive writhings of her fierce spirit, was shaken the external placidity of her demeanor. Her voice grew more gentle—grew more low—yet I would not wish to dwell upon the wild meaning of the quietly uttered words. My brain reeled as I hearkened entranced, to a melody more than mortal—to assumptions and aspirations which mortality had never before known.

That she loved me I should not have doubted; and I might have been easily aware that, in a bosom such as hers, love would have reigned no ordinary passion. But in death only, was I fully impressed with the strength of her affection. For long hours, detaining my hand, would she pour out before me the overflowing of a heart whose more than passionate devotion amounted to idolatry. How had I deserved to be so blessed by such confessions?—how had I deserved to be so cursed with the removal of my beloved in the hour of her making them? But upon this subject I cannot bear to dilate. Let me say only, that in Ligeia's more than womanly abandonment to a love, alas! all unmerited, all unworthily bestowed, I at length recognized the principle of her longing, with so wildly earnest a desire, for the life which was now fleeing so rapidly away. It is this wild longing—it is this eager vehemence of desire for life—but for life—that I have no power to portray—no utterance capable of expressing.

At high noon of the night in which she departed, beckoning me, peremptorily, to her side, she bade me repeat certain verses composed by

herself not many days before. I obeyed her.—They were these:

THE CONQUEROR WORM

*Lo! 'tis a gala night
Within the lonesome latter years!
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in a theatre, to see
A play of hopes and fears,
While the orchestra breathes fitfully
The music of the spheres.*

*Mimes, in the form of God on high,
Mutter and mumble low,
And hither and thither fly—
Mcrc puppets they, who come and go
At bidding of vast formless things
That shift the scenery to and fro,
Flapping from out their Condor wings
Invisible Wo!*

*That motley drama—oh, be sure
It shall not be forgot!
With its Phantom chased for evermore,
By a crowd that seize it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
To the self-same spot,
And much of Madness, and more of Sin,
And Horror the soul of the plot.*

*But see, amid the mimic rout
A crawling shape intrude!
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
The scenic solitude!
It writhes;—it writhes! with mortal pangs
The mimes become its food,
And seraphs sob at vermin fangs
In human gore imbued.*

*Out—out are the lights—out all!
And over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
While the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, "Man,"
And its hero, the Conqueror Worm.*

"O God!" half shrieked Ligeia, leaping to her feet and extending her arms aloft with a spasmodic movement, as I made an end of these lines—"O God! O Divine Father!—shall these things be undeviatingly so?—shall this Conqueror be not once conquered? Are we not part and parcel in Thee? Who—who knoweth the mysteries of the

will with its vigor? Man doth not yield him to the angels, *nor unto death utterly*, save only through the weakness of his feeble will."

And now, as if exhausted with emotion, she suffered her white arms to fall, and returned solemnly to her bed of death. And as she breathed her last sighs, there came mingled with them a low murmur from her lips. I bent to them my ear, and distinguished, again, the concluding words of the passage in Glanvill: "*Man doth not yield him to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will.*"

She died;—and I, crushed into the very dust with sorrow, could no longer endure the lonely desolation of my dwelling in the dim and decaying city by the Rhine. I had no lack of what the world calls wealth. Ligeia had brought me far more, very far more, than ordinarily falls to the lot of mortals. After a few months, therefore, of weary and aimless wandering, I purchased, and put in some repair, an abbey, which I shall not name, in one of the wildest and least frequented portions of fair England. The gloomy and dreary grandeur of the building, the almost savage aspect of the domain, the many melancholy and time-honored memories connected with both, had much in unison with the feelings of utter abandonment which had driven me into that remote and unsocial region of the country. Yet although the external abbey, with its verdant decay hanging about it, suffered but little alteration, I gave way with a childlike perversity, and perchance with a faint hope of alleviating my sorrows, to a display of more than regal magnificence within.—For such follies, even in childhood, I had imbibed a taste and now they came back to me as if in the dotage of grief. Alas, I feel how much even of incipient madness might have been discovered in the gorgeous and fantastic draperies, in the solemn carvings of Egypt, in the wild cornices and furniture, in the Bedlam patterns of the carpets of tufted gold! I had become a bounden slave in the trammels of opium, and my labors and my orders had taken a coloring from my dreams. But these absurdities I must not pause to detail. Let me speak only of that one chamber, ever accursed, whither in a moment of mental alienation, I led from the altar as my bride—as the successor of the unforgotten Ligeia—the fair-haired and blue-eyed Lady Rowena Trevanion, of Tremaine.

There is no individual portion of the architecture and decoration of that bridal chamber which is not now visibly before me. Where were the souls of the haughty family of the bride, when, through thirst of gold, they permitted to pass the threshold of an apartment *so* bedecked, a maiden and a daughter so beloved? I have said that I minutely remember the details of the chamber—yet I am sadly forgetful on topics of deep moment—and here there was no system, no keeping, in the fantastic display, to take hold upon the memory. The room lay in a high turret of the castellated abbey, was pentagonal in shape, and of capacious size. Occupying the whole southern face of the pentagon was the sole window—an immense sheet of unbroken glass from Venice—a single pane, and tinted of a leaden hue, so that the rays of either the sun or moon, passing through it, fell with a ghastly lustre on the objects within. Over the upper portion of this huge window extended the trellis-work of an aged vine, which clambered up the massy walls of the turret. The ceiling, of gloomy-looking oak, was excessively lofty, vaulted, and elaborately fretted with the wildest and most grotesque specimens of a semi-Gothic, semi-Druidical device. From out the most central recess of this melancholy vaulting, depended, by a single chain of gold with long links, a huge censer of the same metal, Saracenic in pattern, and with many perforations so contrived that there writhed in and out of them, as if endued with a serpent vitality, a continual succession of parti-colored fires.

Some few ottomans and golden candelabra, of Eastern figure, were in various stations about—and there was the couch, too—the bridal couch—of an Indian model, and low, and sculptured of solid ebony, with a pall-like canopy above. In each of the angles of the chamber stood on end a gigantic sarcophagus of black granite, from the tombs of the kings over against Luxor, with their aged lids full of immemorial sculpture. But in the draping of the apartment lay, alas! the chief phantasy of all. The lofty walls, gigantic in height—even unproportionably so—were hung from summit to foot, in vast folds, with a heavy and massive-looking tapestry—tapestry of a material which was found alike as a carpet on the floor, as a covering for the ottomans and the ebony bed, as a canopy for the bed, and as the gorgeous volutes of the curtains which partially

shaded the window. The material was the richest cloth of gold. It was spotted all over, at irregular intervals, with arabesque figures, about a foot in diameter, and wrought upon the cloth in patterns of the most jetty black. But these figures partook of the true character of the arabesque only when regarded from a single point of view. By a contrivance now common, and indeed traceable to a very remote period of antiquity, they were made changeable in aspect. To one entering the room, they bore the appearance of simple monstrosities, but upon a farther advance, this appearance gradually departed; and step by step, as the visitor moved his station in the chamber, he saw himself surrounded by an endless succession of the ghastly forms which belong to the superstition of the Norman, or arise in the guilty slumbers of the monk. The phantasmagoric effect was vastly heightened by the artificial introduction of a strong continual current of wind behind the draperies, giving a hideous and uneasy animation to the whole.

In halls such as these—in a bridal chamber such as this—I passed, with the Lady of Tremaine, the unhallowed hours of the first month of our marriage—passed them with but little disquietude. That my wife dreaded the fierce moodiness of my temper—that she shunned me and loved me but little—I could not help perceiving; but it gave me rather pleasure than otherwise. I loathed her with a hatred belonging more to demon than to man. My memory flew back (oh, with what intensity of regret!) to Ligeia, the beloved, the august, the beautiful, the entombed. I revelled in recollections of her purity, of her wisdom, of her lofty, her ethereal nature, of her passionate, her idolatrous love. Now, then, did my spirit fully and freely burn with more than all the fires of her own. In the excitement of my opium dreams (for I was habitually fettered in the shackles of the drug) I would call aloud upon her name, during the silence of the night, or among the sheltered recesses of the glens by day, as if, through the wild eagerness, the solemn passion, the consuming ardor of my longing for the departed, I could restore her to the pathway she had abandoned—ah, *could* it be forever?—upon the earth.

About the commencement of the second month of the marriage, the Lady Rowena was attacked with sudden illness, from which her recovery was slow. The fever which consumed her

rendered her nights uneasy; and in her perturbed state of half-slumber, she spoke of sounds, and of motions, in and about the chamber of the turret, which I concluded had no origin save in the distemper of her fancy, or perhaps in the phantasmagoric influences of the chamber itself. She became at length convalescent—finally well. Yet but a brief period elapsed, ere a second more violent disorder again threw her upon a bed of suffering, and from this attack her frame, at all times feeble, never altogether recovered. Her illnesses were, after this epoch, of alarming character, and of more alarming recurrence, defying alike the knowledge and the great exertions of her physicians. With the increase of the chronic disease, which had thus, apparently, taken too sure hold upon her constitution to be eradicated by human means, I could not fail to observe a similar increase in the nervous irritation of her temperament, and in her excitability by trivial causes of fear. She spoke again, and now more frequently and pertinaciously, of the sounds—of the slight sounds—and of the unusual motions among the tapestries, to which she had formerly alluded.

One night, near the closing in of September, she pressed this distressing subject with more than usual emphasis upon my attention. She had just awakened from an unquiet slumber, and I had been watching, with feelings half of anxiety, half of vague terror, the workings of her emaciated countenance. I sat by the side of her ebony bed, upon one of the ottomans of India. She partly arose, and spoke, in an earnest low whisper, of sounds which she *then* heard, but which I could not hear—of motions which she *then* saw, but which I could not perceive. The wind was rushing hurriedly behind the tapestries, and I wished to show her (what, let me confess it, I could not *all* believe) that those almost inarticulate breathings, and those very gentle variations of the figures upon the wall, were but the natural effects of that customary rushing of the wind. But a deadly pallor, overspreading her face, had proved to me that my exertions to reassure her would be fruitless. She appeared to be fainting, and no attendants were within call. I remembered where was deposited a decanter of light wine which had been ordered by her physicians, and hastened across the chamber to procure it. But, as I stepped beneath the light of the censer, two circumstances of a startling nature attracted

my attention I had felt that some palpable although invisible object had passed lightly by my person, and I saw that there lay upon the golden carpet, in the very middle of the rich lustre thrown from the censer, a shadow—a faint, indefinite shadow of angelic aspect—such as might be fancied for the shadow of a shade. But I was wild with the excitement of an immoderate dose of opium, and heeded these things but little, nor spoke of them to Rowena. Having found the wine, I recrossed the chamber, and poured out a goblet-ful, which I held to the lips of the fainting lady. She had now partially recovered, however, and took the vessel herself, while I sank upon an ottoman near me, with my eyes fastened upon her person. It was then that I became distinctly aware of a gentle foot-fall upon the carpet, and near the couch, and in a second thereafter, as Rowena was in the act of raising the wine to her lips, I saw, or may have dreamed that I saw, fall within the goblet, as if from some invisible spring in the atmosphere of the room, three or four large drops of a brilliant and ruby colored fluid. If this I saw—not so Rowena. She swallowed the wine unhesitatingly, and I forbore to speak to her of a circumstance which must after all, I considered, have been but the suggestion of a vivid imagination, rendered morbidly active by the terror of the lady, by the opium, and by the hour.

Yet I cannot conceal it from my own perception that, immediately subsequent to the fall of the ruby-drops, a rapid change for the worse took place in the disorder of my wife; so that, on the third subsequent night, the hands of her menials prepared her for the tomb, and on the fourth, I sat alone, with her shrouded body, in that fantastic chamber which had received her as my bride. Wild visions, opium-engendered, flitted shadow-like before me. I gazed with unquiet eye upon the sarcophagi in the angles of the room, upon the varying figures of the drapery, and upon the writhings of the parti-colored fires in the censer overhead. My eyes then fell, as I called to mind the circumstances of a former night, to the spot beneath the glare of the censer where I had seen the faint traces of the shadow. It was there, however, no longer; and breathing with greater freedom, I turned my glances to the pallid and rigid figure upon the bed. Then rushed upon me a thousand memories of Ligeia—and then came back upon my heart, with the

turbulent violence of a flood, the whole of that unutterable wo with which I had regarded *her* thus enshrouded. The night waned; and still, with a bosom full of bitter thoughts of the one only and supremely beloved, I remained gazing upon the body of Rowena.

It might have been midnight, or perhaps earlier, or later, for I had taken no note of time, when a sob, low, gentle, but very distinct, startled me from my reverie.—I *felt* that it came from the bed of ebony—the bed of death. I listened in an agony of superstitious terror—but there was no repetition of the sound. I strained my vision to detect any motion in the corpse—but there was not the slightest perceptible Yet I could not have been deceived I *had* heard the noise, however, faint, and my soul was awakened within me. I resolutely and perseveringly kept my attention riveted upon the body. Many minutes elapsed before any circumstance occurred tending to throw light upon the mystery. At length it became evident that a slight, a very feeble, and barely noticeable tinge of color had flushed up within the cheeks, and along the sunken small veins of the eyelids. Through a species of unutterable horror and awe, for which the language of mortality has no sufficiently energetic expression, I felt my heart cease to beat, my limbs grow rigid where I sat. Yet a sense of duty finally operated to restore my self-possession. I could no longer doubt that we had been precipitate in our preparations—that Rowena still lived. It was necessary that some immediate exertion be made; yet the turret was altogether apart from the portion of the abbey tenanted by the servants—there were none within call—I had no means of summoning them to my aid without leaving the room for many minutes—and this I could not venture to do. I therefore struggled alone in my endeavors to call back the spirit still hovering. In a short period it was certain, however, that a relapse had taken place; the color disappeared from both eyelid and cheek, leaving a wanness even more than that of marble; the lips became doubly shrivelled and pinched up in the ghastly expression of death; a repulsive clamminess and coldness overspread rapidly the surface of the body; and all the usual rigorous stiffness immediately supervened. I fell back with a shudder upon the couch from which I had been so startingly aroused, and again gave myself up to passionate waking visions of Ligeia.

An hour thus elapsed, when (could it be possible?) I was a second time aware of some vague sound issuing from the region of the bed. I listened—in extremity of horror. The sound came again—it was a sigh. Rushing to the corpse, I saw—distinctly saw—a tremor upon the lips. In a minute afterwards they relaxed, disclosing a bright line of the pearly teeth. Amazement now struggled in my bosom with the profound awe which had hitherto reigned there alone. I felt that my vision grew dim, that my reason wandered; and it was only by a violent effort that I at length succeeded in nerving myself to the task which duty thus once more had pointed out. There was now a partial glow upon the forehead and upon the cheek and throat; a perceptible warmth pervaded the whole frame, there was even a slight pulsation at the heart. The lady *lived*; and with redoubled ardor I betook myself to the task of restoration. I chafed and bathed the temples and the hands, and used every exertion which experience, and no little medical reading, could suggest. But in vain. Suddenly, the color fled, the pulsation ceased, the lips resumed the expression of the dead, and, in an instant afterward, the whole body took upon itself the icy chilliness, the livid hue, the intense rigidity, the sunken outline, and all the loathsome peculiarities of that which had been, for many days, a tenant of the tomb.

And again I sunk into visions of Ligeia—and again (what marvel that I shudder while I write?), *again* there reached my ears a low sob from the region of the ebony bed. But why shall I minutely detail the unspeakable horrors of that night? Why shall I pause to relate how, time after time, until near the period of the gray dawn, this hideous drama of revivification was repeated; how each terrific relapse was only into a sterner and apparently more irredeemable death; how each agony wore the aspect of a struggle with some invisible foe; and how each struggle was succeeded by I know not what of wild change in the personal appearance of the corpse? Let me hurry to a conclusion.

The greater part of the fearful night had worn away, and she who had been dead, once again stirred—and now more vigorously than hitherto, although arousing from a dissolution more appalling in its utter hopelessness than any. I had long ceased to struggle or to move, and remained

sitting rigidly upon the ottoman, a helpless prey to a whirl of violent emotions, of which extreme awe was perhaps the least terrible, the least consuming. The corpse, I repeat, stirred, and now more vigorously than before. The hues of life flushed up with unwonted energy into the countenance—the limbs relaxed—and, save that the eyelids were yet pressed heavily together, and that the bandages and draperies of the grave still imparted their charnel character to the figure, I might have dreamed that Rowena had indeed shaken off, utterly, the fetters of Death. But if this idea was not, even then, altogether adopted, I could at least doubt no longer, when arising from the bed, tottering, with feeble steps, with closed eyes, and with the manner of one bewildered in a dream, the thing that was enshrouded advanced bodily and palpably into the middle of the apartment.

I trembled not—I stirred not—for a crowd of unutterable fancies connected with the air, the stature, the demeanor of the figure, rushing hurriedly through my brain, had paralyzed—had chilled me into stone. I stirred not—but gazed upon the apparition. There was a mad disorder in my thoughts—a tumult unappeasable. Could it, indeed, be the *living* Rowena who confronted me? Could it indeed be Rowena *at all*—the fair-haired, the blue-eyed Lady Rowena Trevanion of Tremaine? Why, *why* should I doubt it? The bandage lay heavily about the mouth—but then might it not be the mouth of the breathing Lady of Tremaine? And the cheeks—there were the roses as in her noon of life—yes, these might indeed be the fair cheeks of the living Lady of Tremaine. And the chin, with its dimples, as in health, might it not be hers? but *had she then grown taller since her malady?* What inexpressible madness seized me with that thought? One bound, and I had reached her feet! Shrinking from my touch, she let fall from her head, unloosened, the ghastly cerements which had confined it, and there streamed forth, into the rushing atmosphere of the chamber, huge masses of long and dishevelled hair; *it was blacker than the raven wings of the midnight!* And now slowly opened the *eyes* of the figure which stood before me. “Here then, at least,” I shrieked aloud, “can I never—can I never be mistaken—these are the full, and the black, and the wild eyes—of my lost love—of the lady—of the *LADY LIGEIA!*”

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

(1839)

The setting of this story, one of Poe's finest, is reminiscent of the Gothic romances, which influenced Poe and Hawthorne after the type had ceased to be popular in England. The opening paragraph should be compared with the opening stanza of "Ulalume" and perhaps the opening chapter of Thomas Hardy's *The Return of the Native*. The "inordinate expansion above the regions of the temple" in Roderick Usher refers to the phrenological faculty of Ideality, which is what makes one an artist—note that Usher is represented as a poet and musician. Imagine the impression made upon his imagination by his dreary surroundings.

"The Haunted Palace," first published in 1839, which purports to be one of Usher's "rhymed verbal improvisations," has a perfect setting in the tale. Its function as an integral part of the short story is to suggest "a full consciousness on the part of Usher, of the tottering of his lofty reason upon her throne." Poe, in writing to Griswold, said, "By 'The Haunted Palace' I mean to imply a mind haunted by phantoms—a disordered brain."

Can you find in the opening paragraph a phrase which adequately describes the "effect" of the story? For an analysis of this story, see James Weber Linn and Houghton Wells Taylor, *A Foreword to Fiction* (1935), Chapter XII, "A Short Story: 'The Fall of the House of Usher.'"

*Son cœur est un luth suspendu;
Siôt qu'on le touche il résonne.¹*

DE BÉRANGER.

During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was—but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half-pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible. I looked upon the scene before me—upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain—upon the bleak walls—upon the vacant eye-like windows—upon a few rank sedges

¹ "His heart is a lute hung up; as soon as it is touched, it resounds."

—and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees—with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reveller upon opium—the bitter lapse into everyday life—the hideous dropping off of the veil. There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart—an unredeemed dreariness of thought which no goading of the imagination could torture into aught of the sublime. What was it—I paused to think—what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered. I was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory conclusion, that while, beyond doubt, there are combinations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus affecting us, still the analysis of this power lies among considerations beyond our depth. It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate, its capacity for sorrowful expression; and acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled lustre by the dwelling, and gazed down—but with a shudder even more thrilling than before—upon the remodelled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant and eye-like windows.

Nevertheless, in this mansion of gloom I now proposed to myself a sojourn of some weeks. Its proprietor, Roderick Usher, had been one of my boon companions in boyhood; but many years had elapsed since our last meeting. A letter, however, had lately reached me in a distant part of the country—a letter from him—which, in its wildly importunate nature, had admitted of no other than a personal reply. The MS. gave evidence of nervous agitation. The writer spoke of acute bodily illness—of a mental disorder which oppressed him—and of an earnest desire to see me, as his best, and indeed his only personal friend, with a view of attempting, by the cheerfulness of my society, some alleviation of his malady. It was the manner in which all this, and much more, was said—it was the apparent heart that went with its request—which allowed me no room for hesitation; and I accordingly

obeyed forthwith what I still considered a very singular summons.

Although, as boys, we had been even intimate associates, yet I really knew little of my friend. His reserve had been always excessive and habitual. I was aware, however, that his very ancient family had been noted, time out of mind, for a peculiar sensibility of temperament, displaying itself, through long ages, in many works of exalted art, and manifested, of late, in repeated deeds of munificent yet unobtrusive charity, as well as in a passionate devotion to the intricacies, perhaps even more than to the orthodox and easily recognizable beauties, of musical science. I had learned, too, the very remarkable fact, that the stem of the Usher race, all time-honored as it was, had put forth, at no period, any enduring branch, in other words, that the entire family lay in the direct line of descent, and had always, with very trifling and very temporary variation, so lain. It was this deficiency, I considered, while running over in thought the perfect keeping of the character of the premises with the accredited character of the people, and while speculating upon the possible influence which the one, in the long lapse of centuries, might have exercised upon the other—it was this deficiency, perhaps, of collateral issue, and the consequent undeviating transmission from sire to son of the patrimony with the name, which had, at length, so identified the two as to merge the original title of the estate in the quaint and equivocal appellation of the "House of Usher"—an appellation which seemed to include, in the minds of the peasantry who used it, both the family and the family mansion.

I have said that the sole effect of my somewhat childish experiment—that of looking down within the tarn—had been to deepen the first singular impression. There can be no doubt that the consciousness of the rapid increase of my superstition—for why should I not so term it?—served mainly to accelerate the increase itself. Such, I have long known, is the paradoxical law of all sentiments having terror as a basis. And it might have been for this reason only, that, when I again uplifted my eyes to the house itself, from its image in the pool, there grew in my mind a strange fancy—a fancy so ridiculous, indeed, that I but mention it to show the vivid force of the sensations which oppressed me. I had so worked upon my imagination as really to believe

that about the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity—an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn—a pestilent and mystic vapor, dull, sluggish, faintly discernible, and leaden-hued.

Shaking off from my spirit what *must* have been a dream, I scanned more narrowly the real aspect of the building. Its principal feature seemed to be that of an excessive antiquity. The discoloration of ages had been great. Minute *fungi* overspread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine tangled web-work from the eaves. Yet all this was apart from any extraordinary dilapidation. No portion of the masonry had fallen; and there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between its still perfect adaptation of parts, and the crumbling condition of the individual stones. In this there was much that reminded me of the specious totality of old wood-work which has rotted for long years in some neglected vault, with no disturbance from the breath of the external air. Beyond this indication of extensive decay, however, the fabric gave little token of instability. Perhaps the eye of a scrutinizing observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn.

Noticing these things, I rode over a short causeway to the house. A servant in waiting took my horse, and I entered the Gothic archway of the hall. A valet, of stealthy step, thence conducted me, in silence, through many dark and intricate passages in my progress to the *studio* of his master. Much that I encountered on the way contributed, I know not how, to heighten the vague sentiments of which I have already spoken. While the objects around me—while the carvings of the ceilings, the sombre tapestries of the walls, the ebon blackness of the floors, and the phantasmagoric armorial trophies which rattled as I strode, were but matters to which, or to such as which, I had been accustomed from my infancy—while I hesitated not to acknowledge how familiar was all this—I still wondered to find how unfamiliar were the fancies which ordinary images were stirring up. On one of the staircases, I met the physician of the family. His countenance, I

thought, wore a mingled expression of low cunning and perplexity. He accosted me with trepidation and passed on. The valet now threw open a door and ushered me into the presence of his master.

The room in which I found myself was very large and lofty. The windows were long, narrow, and pointed, and at so vast a distance from the black oaken floor as to be altogether inaccessible from within. Feeble gleams of encrimsoned light made their way through the trellised panes, and served to render sufficiently distinct the more prominent objects around, the eye, however, struggled in vain to reach the remoter angles of the chamber, or the recesses of the vaulted and fretted ceiling. Dark draperies hung upon the walls. The general furniture was profuse, comfortable, antique, and tattered. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene. I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all.

Upon my entrance, Usher arose from a sofa on which he had been lying at full length, and greeted me with a vivacious warmth which had much in it, I at first thought, of an overdone cordiality—of the constrained effort of the *ennuyé* man of the world. A glance, however, at his countenance convinced me of his perfect sincerity. We sat down; and for some moments, while he spoke not, I gazed upon him with a feeling half of pity, half of awe. Surely man had never before so terribly altered, in so brief a period, as had Roderick Usher! It was with difficulty that I could bring myself to admit the identity of the wan being before me with the companion of my early boyhood. Yet the character of his face had been at all times remarkable. A cadaverousness of complexion; an eye large, liquid, and luminous beyond comparison; lips somewhat thin and very pallid, but of a surpassingly beautiful curve; a nose of a delicate Hebrew model, but with a breadth of nostril unusual in similar formations; a finely moulded chin, speaking, in its want of prominence, of a want of moral energy; hair of a more than web-like softness and tenuity; these features, with an inordinate expansion above the regions of the temple, made up altogether a countenance not easily to be forgotten. And now in the mere exaggeration of the prevailing character of these

features, and of the expression they were wont to convey, lay so much of change that I doubted to whom I spoke. The now ghastly pallor of the skin, and the now miraculous lustre of the eye, above all things startled and even awed me. The silken hair, too, had been suffered to grow all unheeded, and as, in its wild gossamer texture, it floated rather than fell about the face, I could not, even with effort, connect its arabesque expression with any idea of simple humanity.

In the manner of my friend I was at once struck with an incoherence—an inconsistency; and I soon found this to arise from a series of feeble and futile struggles to overcome an habitual trepidancy—an excessive nervous agitation. For something of this nature I had indeed been prepared, no less by his letter, than by reminiscences of certain boyish traits, and by conclusions deduced from his peculiar physical conformation and temperament. His action was alternately vivacious and sullen. His voice varied rapidly from a tremulous indecision (when the animal spirits seemed utterly in abeyance) to that species of energetic concision—that abrupt, weighty, unhesitant, and hollow-sounding enunciation—that leaden, self-balanced and perfectly modulated guttural utterance—which may be observed in the lost drunkard, or the irreclaimable eater of opium, during the periods of his most intense excitement.

It was thus that he spoke of the object of my visit, of his earnest desire to see me, and of the solace he expected me to afford him. He entered, at some length, into what he conceived to be the nature of his malady. It was, he said, a constitutional and a family evil, and one for which he despaired to find a remedy—a mere nervous affection, he immediately added, which would undoubtedly soon pass off. It displayed itself in a host of unnatural sensations. Some of these, as he detailed them, interested and bewildered me; although, perhaps, the terms, and the general manner of the narration had their weight. He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses; the most insipid food was alone endurable; he could wear only garments of certain texture; the odors of all flowers were oppressive; his eyes were tortured by even a faint light; and there were but peculiar sounds, and these from stringed instruments, which did not inspire him with horror.

To an anomalous species of terror I found him

a bounden slave. "I shall perish," said he, "I must perish in this deplorable folly. Thus, thus, and not otherwise, shall I be lost I dread the events of the future, not in themselves, but in their results. I shudder at the thought of any, even the most trivial, incident, which may operate upon this intolerable agitation of soul. I have, indeed, no abhorrence of danger, except in its absolute effect—in terror. In this unnerved—in this pitiable condition—I feel that the period will sooner or later arrive when I must abandon life and reason together, in some struggle with the grim phantasm, FEAR."

I learned, moreover, at intervals, and through broken and equivocal hints, another singular feature of his mental condition. He was enchained by certain superstitious impressions in regard to the dwelling which he tenanted, and whence, for many years, he had never ventured forth—in regard to an influence whose supposititious force was conveyed in terms too shadowy here to be restated—an influence which some peculiarities in the mere form and substance of his family mansion, had, by dint of long sufferance, he said, obtained over his spirit—an effect which the *physique* of the gray walls and turrets, and of the dim tarn into which they all looked down, had, at length, brought about upon the *morale* of his existence.

He admitted, however, although with hesitation, that much of the peculiar gloom which thus afflicted him could be traced to a more natural and far more palpable origin—to the severe and long-continued illness—indeed to the evidently approaching dissolution—of a tenderly beloved sister—his sole companion for long years—his last and only relative on earth. "Her decease," he said, with a bitterness which I can never forget, "would leave him (him the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers." While he spoke, the lady Madeline (for so was she called) passed slowly through a remote portion of the apartment, and, without having noticed my presence, disappeared. I regarded her with an utter astonishment not unmingled with dread—and yet I found it impossible to account for such feelings. A sensation of stupor oppressed me, as my eyes followed her retreating steps. When a door, at length, closed upon her, my glance sought instinctively and eagerly the countenance of the brother—but he had buried his face in his hands, and I could only perceive

that a far more than ordinary wanness had overspread the emaciated fingers through which trickled many passionate tears.

The disease of the lady Madeline had long baffled the skill of her physician. A settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent, although transient affections of a partially cataleptical character, were the unusual diagnosis. Hitherto she had steadily borne up against the pressure of her malady, and had not betaken herself finally to bed; but, on the closing in of the evening of my arrival at the house, she succumbed (as her brother told me at night with inexpressible agitation) to the prostrating power of the destroyer, and I learned that the glimpse I had obtained of her person would thus probably be the last I should obtain—that the lady, at least while living, would be seen by me no more.

For several days ensuing, her name was unmentioned by either Usher or myself: and during this period I was busied in earnest endeavors to alleviate the melancholy of my friend. We painted and read together; or I listened, as if in a dream, to the wild improvisations of his speaking guitar. And thus, as a closer and still closer intimacy admitted me more unreservedly into the recesses of his spirit, the more bitterly did I perceive the futility of all attempt at cheering a mind from which darkness, as if an inherent positive quality, poured forth upon all objects of the moral and physical universe, in one unceasing radiation of gloom.

I shall ever bear about me a memory of the many solemn hours I thus spent alone with the master of the House of Usher. Yet I should fail in any attempt to convey an idea of the exact character of the studies, or of the occupations, in which he involved me, or led me the way. An excited and highly distempered ideality threw a sulphureous lustre over all. His long improvised dirges will ring forever in my ears. Among other things, I hold painfully in mind a certain singular perversion and amplification of the wild air of the last waltz of Von Weber. From the paintings over which his elaborate fancy brooded, and which grew, touch by touch, into vagueness at which I shuddered the more thrillingly, because I shuddered knowing not why;—from these paintings (vivid as their images now are before me) I would in vain endeavor to educe more than a small portion which should lie within

the compass of merely written words. By the utter simplicity, by the nakedness of his designs, he arrested and overawed attention. If ever mortal painted an idea, that mortal was Roderrick Usher. For me at least—in the circumstances then surrounding me—there arose out of the pure abstractions which the hypochondriac contrived to throw upon his canvass, an intensity of intolerable awe, no shadow of which felt I ever yet in the contemplation of the certainly glowing yet too concrete reveries of Fuseli.

One of the phantasmagoric conceptions of my friend, partaking not so rigidly of the spirit of abstraction, may be shadowed forth, although feebly, in words. A small picture presented the interior of an immensely long and rectangular vault or tunnel, with low walls, smooth, white, and without interruption or device. Certain accessory points of the design served well to convey the idea that this excavation lay at an exceeding depth below the surface of the earth. No outlet was observed in any portion of its vast extent, and no torch, or other artificial source of light was discernible; yet a flood of intense rays flooded throughout, and bathed the whole in a ghastly and inappropriate splendor.

I have just spoken of that morbid condition of the auditory nerve which rendered all music intolerable to the sufferer, with the exception of certain effects of stringed instruments. It was, perhaps, the narrow limits to which he thus confined himself upon the guitar, which gave birth, in great measure, to the fantastic character of his performances. But the fervid *facility* of his *impromptus* could not be so accounted for. They must have been, and were, in the notes, as well as in the words of his wild fantasias (for he not unfrequently accompanied himself with rhymed verbal improvisations), the result of that intense mental collectedness and concentration to which I have previously alluded as observable only in particular moments of the highest artificial excitement. The words of one of these rhapsodies I have easily remembered. I was, perhaps, the more forcibly impressed with it, as he gave it, because, in the under or mystic current of its meaning, I fancied that I perceived, and for the first time, a full consciousness, on the part of Usher, of the tottering of his lofty reason upon her throne. The verses, which were entitled "The Haunted Palace," ran very nearly, if not accurately, thus:

THE HAUNTED PALACE

I

*In the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion,
It stood there!
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair!*

II

*Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow
(This—all this—was in the olden
Time long ago),
And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A winged odor went away.*

III

*Wanderers in that happy valley,
Through two luminous windows, saw
Spirits moving musically
To a lute's well-tuned law,
Round about a throne where, sitting,
Porphyrogene!
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen*

IV

*And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.*

V

*But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate.
(Ah, let us mourn!—for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him, desolate!)
And round about his home the glory
That blushed and bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.*

² Born to the purple; royal born.

And travellers, now, within that valley,
 Through the red-litten windows see
 Vast forms that move fantastically
 To a discordant melody,
 While, like a ghastly rapid river,
 Through the pale door
 A hideous throng rush out forever,
 And laugh—but smile no more.

I well remember that suggestions arising from this ballad, led us into a train of thought wherein there became manifest an opinion of Usher's which I mention not so much on account of its novelty, (for other men³ have thought thus), as on account of the pertinacity with which he maintained it. This opinion, in its general form, was that of the sentence of all vegetable things. But, in his disordered fancy, the idea had assumed a more daring character, and trespassed, under certain conditions, upon the kingdom of inorganization. I lack words to express the full extent, or the earnest *abandon* of his persuasion. The belief, however, was connected (as I have previously hinted) with the gray stones of the home of his forefathers. The conditions of the sentence had been here, he imagined, fulfilled in the method of collocation of these stones—in the order of their arrangement, as well as in that of the many *fungi* which overspread them, and of the decayed trees which stood around—above all, in the long undisturbed endurance of this arrangement, and in its reduplication in the still waters of the tarn. Its evidence—the evidence of the sentence—was to be seen, he said (and I here started as he spoke), in the gradual yet certain condensation of an atmosphere of their own about the waters and the walls. The result was discoverable, he added, in that silent, yet importunate and terrible influence which for centuries had moulded the destinies of his family, and which made *him* what I now saw him—what he was. Such opinions need no comment, and I will make none.

Our books—the books which, for years, had formed no small portion of the mental existence of the invalid—were, as might be supposed, in strict keeping with this character of phantasm. We pored together over such works as the

³ Watson, Dr. Percival, Spallanzani, and especially the Bishop of Landaff.—See *Chemical Essays*, vol. v. (Author's note.)

Ververt et Chartreuse of Gresset, the *Belphegor* of Machiavelli, the *Heaven and Hell* of Swedenborg; the *Subterranean Voyage* of Nicholas Klimm by Holberg, the *Chiromancy* of Robert Flud, of Jean D'Indaginé, and of De la Chambré, the *Journey into the Blue Distance* of Tieck; and the *City of the Sun* of Campanella. One favorite volume was a small octavo edition of the *Directorium Inquisitorium* by the Dominican Eymeric de Gironne; and there were passages in Pomponius Mela, about the old African Satyrs and Ægipans, over which Usher would sit dreaming for hours. His chief delight, however, was found in the perusal of an exceedingly rare and curious book in quarto Gothic—the manual of a forgotten church—the *Vigilæ Mortuorum secundum Chorum Ecclesiæ Maguntinæ*.

I could not help thinking of the wild ritual of this work, and of its probable influence upon the hypochondriac, when one evening, having informed me abruptly that the Lady Madeline was no more, he stated his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight (previously to its final interment), in one of the numerous vaults within the main walls of the building. The worldly reason, however, assigned for this singular proceeding, was one which I did not feel at liberty to dispute. The brother had been led to his resolution (so he told me) by consideration of the unusual character of the malady of the deceased, of certain obtrusive and eager inquiries on the part of her medical men, and of the remote and exposed situation of the burial-ground of the family. I will not deny that when I called to mind the sinister countenance of the person whom I met upon the staircase, on the day of my arrival at the house, I had no desire to oppose what I regarded as at best but a harmless, and by no means an unnatural, precaution.

At the request of Usher, I personally aided him in the arrangements for the temporary entombment. The body having been encoffined, we two alone bore it to its rest. The vault in which we placed it (and which had been so long unopened that our torches, half smothered in its oppressive atmosphere, gave us little opportunity for investigation) was small, damp, and entirely without means of admission for light; lying, at great depth, immediately beneath that portion of the building in which was my own sleeping apartment. It had been used, apparently, in remote feudal times, for the worst pur-

poses of a donjon-keep, and, in later days, as a place of deposit for powder, or some other highly combustible substance, as a portion of its floor, and the whole interior of a long archway through which we reached it, were carefully sheathed with copper. The door, of massive iron, had been, also, similarly protected. Its immense weight caused an unusually sharp grating sound, as it moved upon its hinges.

Having deposited our mournful burden upon tressels within this region of horror, we partially turned aside the yet unscrewed lid of the coffin, and looked upon the face of the tenant. A striking similitude between the brother and sister now first arrested my attention; and Usher, divining, perhaps, my thoughts, murmured out some few words from which I learned that the deceased and himself had been twins, and that sympathies of a scarcely intelligible nature had always existed between them. Our glances, however, rested not long upon the dead—for we could not regard her unawed. The disease which had thus entombed the lady in the maturity of youth, had left, as usual in all maladies of a strictly cataleptical character, the mockery of a faint blush upon the bosom and the face, and that suspiciously lingering smile upon the lip which is so terrible in death. We replaced and screwed down the lid, and, having secured the door of iron, made our way, with toil, into the scarcely less gloomy apartments of the upper portion of the house.

And now, some days of bitter grief having elapsed, an observable change came over the features of the mental disorder of my friend. His ordinary manner had vanished. His ordinary occupations were neglected or forgotten. He roamed from chamber to chamber with hurried, unequal, and objectless step. The pallor of his countenance had assumed, if possible, a more ghastly hue—but the luminousness of his eye had utterly gone out. The once occasional huskiness of his tone was heard no more; and a tremulous quaver, as if of extreme terror, habitually characterized his utterance. There were times, indeed, when I thought his unceasingly agitated mind was laboring with some oppressive secret, to divulge which he struggled for the necessary courage. At times, again, I was obliged to resolve all into the mere inexplicable vagaries of madness, for I beheld him gazing upon vacancy for long hours, in an attitude of the profoundest attention, as if listening to some imaginary sound.

It was no wonder that his condition terrified—that it infected me. I felt creeping upon me, by slow yet certain degrees, the wild influences of his own fantastic yet impressive superstitions.

It was, especially, upon retiring to bed late in the night of the seventh or eighth day after the placing of the Lady Madeline within the donjon, that I experienced the full power of such feelings. Sleep came not near my couch—while the hours waned and waned away. I struggled to reason off the nervousness which had dominion over me. I endeavored to believe that much if not all of what I felt, was due to the bewildering influence of the gloomy furniture of the room—of the dark and tattered draperies, which, tortured into motion by the breath of a rising tempest, swayed fitfully to and fro upon the walls, and rustled uneasily about the decorations of the bed. But my efforts were fruitless. An irrepressible tremor gradually pervaded my frame; and, at length, there sat upon my very heart an incubus of utterly causeless alarm. Shaking this off with a gasp and a struggle, I uplifted myself upon the pillows, and, peering earnestly within the intense darkness of the chamber, harkened—I know not why, except that an instinctive spirit prompted me—to certain low and indefinite sounds which came, through the pauses of the storm, at long intervals, I knew not whence. Overpowered by an intense sentiment of horror, unaccountable yet unendurable, I threw on my clothes with haste (for I felt that I should sleep no more during the night), and endeavored to arouse myself from the pitiable condition into which I had fallen, by pacing rapidly to and fro through the apartment.

I had taken but few turns in this manner, when a light step on an adjoining staircase arrested my attention. I presently recognized it as that of Usher. In an instant afterward he rapped, with a gentle touch, at my door, and entered, bearing a lamp. His countenance was, as usual, cadaverously wan—but, moreover, there was a species of mad hilarity in his eyes—an evidently restrained *hysteria* in his whole demeanor. His air appalled me—but anything was preferable to the solitude which I had so long endured, and I even welcomed his presence as a relief.

"And you have not seen it?" he said abruptly, after having stared about him for some moments in silence—"you have not then seen it?—but, stay! you shall." Thus speaking, and having

carefully shaded his lamp, he hurried to one of the casements, and threw it freely open to the storm.

The impetuous fury of the entering gust nearly lifted us from our feet. It was, indeed, a tempestuous yet sternly beautiful night, and one wildly singular in its terror and its beauty. A whirlwind had apparently collected its force in our vicinity; for there were frequent and violent alterations in the direction of the wind; and the exceeding density of the clouds (which hung so low as to press upon the turrets of the house) did not prevent our perceiving the life-like velocity with which they flew careering from all points against each other, without passing away into the distance. I say that even their exceeding density did not prevent our perceiving this—yet we had no glimpse of the moon or stars—nor was there any flashing forth of the lightning. But the under surfaces of the huge masses of agitated vapor, as well as all terrestrial objects immediately around us, were glowing in the unnatural light of a faintly luminous and distinctly visible gaseous exhalation which hung about and enshrouded the mansion.

"You must not—you shall not behold this!" said I, shudderingly, to Usher, as I led him with a gentle violence from the window to a seat. "These appearances, which bewilder you, are merely electrical phenomena not uncommon—or it may be that they have their ghastly origin in the rank miasma of the tarn. Let us close this casement;—the air is chilling and dangerous to your frame. Here is one of your favorite romances. I will read, and you shall listen;—and so we will pass away this terrible night together."

The antique volume which I had taken up was the *Mad Trist* of Sir Launcelot Canning; but I had called it a favorite of Usher's more in sad jest than in earnest; for, in truth, there is little in its uncouth and unimaginative prolixity which could have had interest for the lofty and spiritual ideality of my friend. It was, however, the only book immediately at hand; and I indulged a vague hope that the excitement which now agitated the hypochondriac, might find relief (for the history of mental disorder is full of similar anomalies) even in the extremeness of the folly which I should read. Could I have judged, indeed, by the wild overstrained air of vivacity with which he harkened, or apparently harkened, to

the words of the tale, I might well have congratulated myself upon the success of my design.

I had arrived at that well-known portion of the story where Ethelred, the hero of the *Trist*, having sought in vain for peaceable admission into the dwelling of the hermit, proceeds to make good an entrance by force. Here, it will be remembered, the words of the narrative run thus:

"And Ethelred, who was by nature of a doughty heart, and who was now mighty withal, on account of the powerfulness of the wine which he had drunken, waited no longer to hold parley with the hermit, who, in sooth, was of an obstinate and malicious turn, but, feeling the rain upon his shoulders, and fearing the rising of the tempest, uplifted his mace outright, and with blows, made quickly room in the plankings of the door for his gauntleted hand; and now pulling therewith sturdily, he so cracked, and ripped, and tore all asunder, that the noise of the dry and hollow-sounding wood alarmed and reverberated throughout the forest."

At the termination of this sentence I started, and for a moment paused; for it appeared to me (although I at once concluded that my excited fancy had deceived me)—it appeared to me that from some very remote portion of the mansion there came, indistinctly, to my ears, what might have been, in its exact similarity of character, the echo (but a stifled and dull one certainly) of the very cracking and ripping sound which Sir Launcelot had so particularly described. It was, beyond doubt, the coincidence alone which had arrested my attention; for, amid the rattling of the sashes of the casements, and the ordinary commingled noises of the still increasing storm, the sound, in itself, had nothing, surely, which should have interested or disturbed me. I continued the story:

"But the good champion Ethelred, now entering within the door, was sore enraged and amazed to perceive no signal of the malicious hermit; but, in the stead thereof, a dragon of a scaly and prodigious demeanor, and of a fiery tongue, which sate in guard before a palace of gold, with a floor of silver; and upon the wall there hung a shield of shining brass with this legend enwritten—

*Who entereth herein, a conqueror hath bin;
Who slayeth the dragon, the shield he shall win;*

and Ethelred uplifted his mace, and struck upon the head of the dragon, which fell before him, and gave up his pesty breath, with a shriek so horrid and harsh, and withal so piercing, that Ethelred had fain to close his ears with his hands against the dreadful noise of it, the like whereof was never before heard."

Here again I paused abruptly, and now with a feeling of wild amazement—for there could be no doubt whatever that, in this instance, I did actually hear (although from what direction it proceeded I found it impossible to say) a low and apparently distant, but harsh, protracted, and most unusual screaming or grating sound—the exact counterpart of what my fancy had already conjured up for the dragon's unnatural shriek as described by the romancer.

Oppressed, as I certainly was, upon the occurrence of this second and most extraordinary coincidence, by a thousand conflicting sensations, in which wonder and extreme terror were predominant, I still retained sufficient presence of mind to avoid exciting, by any observation, the sensitive nervousness of my companion. I was by no means certain that he had noticed the sounds in question; although, assuredly, a strange alteration had, during the last few minutes, taken place in his demeanor. From a position fronting my own, he had gradually brought round his chair, so as to sit with his face to the door of the chamber, and thus I could but partially perceive his features, although I saw that his lips trembled as if he were murmuring inaudibly. His head had dropped upon his breast—yet I knew that he was not asleep, from the wide and rigid opening of the eye as I caught a glance of it in profile. The motion of his body, too, was at variance with this idea—for he rocked from side to side with a gentle yet constant and uniform sway. Having rapidly taken notice of all this, I resumed the narrative of Sir Launcelot, which thus proceeded:

"And now, the champion, having escaped from the terrible fury of the dragon, bethinking himself of the brazen shield, and of the breaking up of the enchantment which was upon it, removed the carcass from out of the way before him, and approached valourously over the silver pavement of the castle to where the shield was upon the wall; which in sooth tarried not for his full coming, but fell down at his feet upon the

silver floor, with a mighty great and terrible ringing sound"

No sooner had these syllables passed my lips, than—as if a shield of brass had indeed, at the moment, fallen heavily upon a floor of silver—I became aware of a distinct, hollow, metallic and clangorous yet apparently muffled reverberation. Completely unnerved, I leaped to my feet; but the measured rocking movement of Usher was undisturbed. I rushed to the chair in which he sat. His eyes were bent fixedly before him, and throughout his whole countenance there reigned a stony rigidity. But, as I placed my hand upon his shoulder, there came a strong shudder over his whole person; a sickly smile quivered about his lips; and I saw that he spoke in a low, hurried, and gibbering murmur, as if unconscious of my presence. Bending closely over him, I at length drank in the hideous import of his words.

"Not hear it?—yes, I hear it, and *have* heard it. Long—long—long—many minutes, many hours, many days, have I heard it—yet I dared not—oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I am!—I dared not—I *dared* not speak! *We have put her living in the tomb!* Said I not that my senses were acute? I *now* tell you that I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them—many, many days ago—yet I dared not—I *dared not speak!* And now—to-night—Ethelred—ha! ha!—the breaking of the hermit's door, and the death-cry of the dragon, and the clangor of the shield!—say, rather, the rending of her coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, and her struggles within the coppered archway of the vault! Oh, whither shall I fly? Will she not be here anon? Is she not hurrying to upbraid me for my haste? Have I not heard her footstep on the stair? Do I not distinguish that heavy and horrible beating of her heart? *Madman!*"—here he sprang furiously to his feet, and shrieked out his syllables, as if in the effort he were giving up his soul—"Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!"

As if in the superhuman energy of his utterance there had been found the potency of a spell—the huge antique panels to which the speaker pointed threw slowly back, upon the instant, their ponderous and ebony jaws. It was the work of the rushing gust—but then without those doors there *did* stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the Lady Madeline of Usher.

There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold—then, with a low moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and in her violent and now final death-agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim to the terrors he had anticipated

From that chamber, and from that mansion, I fled aghast. The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway. Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued; for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me. The radiance was that of the full, setting, and blood-red moon, which now shone vividly through that once barely-discernible fissure, of which I have before spoken as extending from the roof to the building, in a zigzag direction, to the base. While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder—there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the “HOUSE OF USHER.”

THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH (1842)

This is a story in which the setting seems more important than either the characters or the action. The “effect” is suggested by a phrase in the opening paragraph—“the redness and the horror of blood.” Note the emphasis upon the pictorial throughout. For an excellent analysis of this tale, see Walter Blair, “Poe’s Conception of Incident and Tone in the Tale,” *Modern Philology*, XLI, 228-240 (May, 1944).

The “Red Death” had long devastated the country. No pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous. Blood was its Avatar and its seal—the redness and the horror of blood. There were sharp pains, and sudden dizziness, and then profuse bleeding at the pores, with dissolution. The scarlet stains upon the body and especially upon the face of the victim, were the pest ban which shut him out from the aid and from the sympathy of his fellow-men. And the whole seizure,

progress, and termination of the disease, were the incidents of half an hour.

But the Prince Prospero was happy and dauntless and sagacious. When his dominions were half depopulated, he summoned to his presence a thousand hale and light-hearted friends from among the knights and dames of his court, and with these retired to the deep seclusion of one of his castellated abbeys. This was an extensive and magnificent structure, the creation of the prince’s own eccentric yet august taste. A strong and lofty wall girdled it in. This wall had gates of iron. The courtiers, having entered, brought furnaces and massy hammers, and welded the bolts. They resolved to leave means neither of ingress or egress to the sudden impulses of despair or of frenzy from within. The abbey was amply provisioned. With such precautions the courtiers might bid defiance to contagion. The external world could take care of itself. In the meantime it was folly to grieve, or to think. The prince had provided all the appliances of pleasure. There were buffoons, there were improvisatori, there were ballet-dancers, there were musicians, there was Beauty, there was wine. All these and security were within. Without was the “Red Death.”

It was toward the close of the fifth or sixth month of his seclusion, and while the pestilence raged most furiously abroad, that the Prince Prospero entertained his thousand friends at a masked ball of the most unusual magnificence.

It was a voluptuous scene, that masquerade. But first let me tell of the rooms in which it was held. There were seven—an imperial suite. In many palaces, however, such suites form a long and straight vista, while the folding doors slide back nearly to the walls on either hand, so that the view of the whole extent is scarcely impeded. Here the case was very different, as might have been expected from the prince’s love of the *bizarre*. The apartments were so irregularly disposed that the vision embraced but little more than one at a time. There was a sharp turn at every twenty or thirty yards, and at each turn a novel effect. To the right and left, in the middle of each wall, a tall and narrow Gothic window looked out upon a closed corridor which pursued the windings of the suite. These windows were of stained glass whose color varied in accordance with the prevailing hue of the decorations of the chamber into which it opened. That

at the eastern extremity was hung, for example, in blue—and vividly blue were its windows. The second chamber was purple in its ornaments and tapestries, and here the panes were purple. The third was green throughout, and so were the casements. The fourth was furnished and lighted with orange—the fifth with white—the sixth with violet. The seventh apartment was closely shrouded in black velvet tapestries that hung all over the ceiling and down the walls, falling in heavy folds upon a carpet of the same material and hue. But in this chamber only, the color of the windows failed to correspond with the decorations. The panes here were scarlet—a deep blood color. Now in no one of the seven apartments was there any lamp or candelabrum, amid the profusion of golden ornaments that lay scattered to and fro or depended from the roof. There was no light of any kind emanating from lamp or candle within the suite of chambers. But in the corridors that followed the suite there stood, opposite to each window, a heavy tripod, bearing a brazier of fire that projected its rays through the tinted glass and so glaringly illumined the room. And thus were produced a multitude of gaudy and fantastic appearances. But in the western or black chamber the effect of the firelight that streamed upon the dark hangings through the blood-tinted panes was ghastly in the extreme, and produced so wild a look upon the countenances of those who entered, that there were few of the company bold enough to set foot within its precincts at all.

It was in this apartment, also, that there stood against the western wall, a gigantic clock of ebony. Its pendulum swung to and fro with a dull, heavy, monotonous clang; and, when the minute-hand made the circuit of the face, and the hour was to be stricken, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceedingly musical, but of so peculiar a note and emphasis that, at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause, momentarily, in their performance, to harken to the sound; and thus the waltzers perforce ceased their evolutions; and there was a brief disconcert of the whole gay company; and, while the chimes of the clock yet rang, it was observed that the giddiest grew pale, and the more aged and sedate passed their hands over their brows as if in confused reverie or meditation. But when the echoes had fully

ceased, a light laughter at once pervaded the assembly; the musicians looked at each other and smiled as if at their own nervousness and folly, and made whispering vows, each to the other, that the next chiming of the clock should produce in them no similar emotion; and then, after the lapse of sixty minutes (which embrace three thousand six hundred seconds of the Time that flies), there came yet another chiming of the clock, and then were the same disconcert and tremulousness and meditation as before.

But, in spite of these things, it was a gay and magnificent revel. The tastes of the prince were peculiar. He had a fine eye for colors and effects. He disregarded the *decora* of mere fashion. His plans were bold and fiery, and his conceptions glowed with barbaric lustre. There are some who would have thought him mad. His followers felt that he was not. It was necessary to hear and see and touch him to be *sure* that he was not.

He had directed, in great part, the moveable embellishments of the seven chambers, upon occasion of this great *fête*; and it was his own guiding taste which had given character to the masqueraders. Be sure they were grotesque. There were much glare and glitter and piquancy and phantasm—much of what has been since seen in *Hernani*.¹ There were arabesque figures with unsuited limbs and appointments. There were delirious fancies such as the madman fashions. There was much of the beautiful, much of the wanton, much of the *bizarre*, something of the terrible, and not a little of that which might have excited disgust. To and fro in the seven chambers there stalked, in fact, a multitude of dreams. And these—the dreams—writhe in and about, taking hue from the rooms, and causing the wild music of the orchestra to seem as the echo of their steps. And, anon, there strikes the ebony clock which stands in the hall of the velvet. And then, for a moment, all is still, and all is silent save the voice of the clock. The dreams are stiff-frozen as they stand. But the echoes of the chime die away—they have endured but an instant—and a light, half-subdued laughter floats after them as they depart. And now again the music swells, and the dreams live, and writhe to and fro more merrily than ever, taking hue from the many-tinted windows through which stream the rays from the tripods. But to the chamber which

¹ A play by Victor Hugo.

lies most westwardly of the seven there are now none of the maskers who venture; for the night is waning away; and there flows a ruddier light through the blood-colored panes, and the blackness of the sable drapery appals, and, to him whose foot falls upon the sable carpet, there comes from the near clock of ebony a muffled peal more solemnly emphatic than any which reaches *their* ears who indulged in the more remote gayeties of the other apartments.

But these other apartments were densely crowded, and in them beat feverishly the heart of life. And the revel went whirlingly on, until at length there commenced the sounding of midnight upon the clock. And then the music ceased, as I have told; and the evolutions of the waltzers were quieted; and there was an uneasy cessation of all things as before. But now there were twelve strokes to be sounded by the bell of the clock; and thus it happened, perhaps, that more of thought crept, with more of time, into the meditations of the thoughtful among those who revelled. And thus, too, it happened, perhaps, that before the last echoes of the last chime had utterly sunk into silence, there were many individuals in the crowd who had found leisure to become aware of the presence of a masked figure who had arrested the attention of no single individual before. And the rumor of this new presence having spread itself whisperingly around, there arose at length from the whole company a buzz, or murmur, expressive of disapprobation and surprise—then, finally, of terror, of horror, and of disgust.

In an assembly of phantasms such as I have painted, it may well be supposed that no ordinary appearance could have excited such sensation. In truth the masquerade license of the night was nearly unlimited; but the figure in question had out-Heroded Herod, and gone beyond the bounds of even the prince's indefinite decorum. There are chords in the hearts of the most reckless which cannot be touched without emotion. Even with the utterly lost, to whom life and death are equally jests, there are matters of which no jest can be made. The whole company, indeed, seemed now deeply to feel that in the costume and bearing of the stranger neither wit nor propriety existed. The figure was tall and gaunt, and shrouded from head to foot in the habiliments of the grave. The mask which concealed the visage was made so nearly to resemble

the countenance of a stiffened corpse that the closest scrutiny must have had difficulty in detecting the cheat. And yet all this might have been endured, if not approved, by the mad revelers around. But the mummer had gone so far as to assume the type of the Red Death. His vesture was dabbled in *blood*—and his broad brow, with all the features of his face, was besprinkled with the scarlet horror.

When the eyes of Prince Prospero fell upon this spectral image (which with a slow and solemn movement, as if more fully to sustain its *rôle*, stalked to and fro among the waltzers) he was seen to be convulsed, in the first moment, with a strong shudder either of terror or distaste; but, in the next, his brow reddened with rage.

"Who dares?"—he demanded hoarsely of the courtiers who stood near him—"who dares insult us with this blasphemous mockery? Seize him and unmask him—that we may know whom we have to hang at sunrise from the battlements!"

It was in the eastern or blue chamber in which stood the Prince Prospero as he uttered these words. They rang throughout the seven rooms loudly and clearly—for the prince was a bold and robust man, and the music had become hushed at the waving of his hand.

It was in the blue room where stood the prince, with a group of pale courtiers by his side. At first, as he spoke, there was a slight rushing movement of this group in the direction of the intruder, who at the moment was also near at hand, and now, with deliberate and stately step, made closer approach to the speaker. But from a certain nameless awe with which the mad assumption of the mummer had inspired the whole party, there were found none who put forth hand to seize him; so that, unimpeded, he passed within a yard of the prince's person; and, while the vast assembly, as if with one impulse, shrank from the centres of the rooms to the walls, he made his way uninterruptedly, but with the same solemn and measured step which had distinguished him from the first, through the blue chamber to the purple—through the purple to the green—through the green to the orange—through this again to the white—and even thence to the violet, ere a decided movement had been made to arrest him. It was then, however, that the Prince Prospero, maddening with rage and the shame of his own momentary cowardice,

rushed hurriedly through the six chambers, while none followed him on account of a deadly terror that had seized upon all. He bore aloft a drawn dagger, and had approached, in rapid impetuosity, to within three or four feet of the retreating figure, when the latter, having attained the extremity of the velvet apartment, turned suddenly and confronted his pursuer. There was a sharp cry—and the dagger dropped gleaming upon the sable carpet, upon which, instantly afterwards, fell prostrate in death the Prince Prospero. Then, summoning the wild courage of despair, a throng of the revellers at once threw themselves into the black apartment, and, seizing the mummer, whose tall figure stood erect and motionless within the shadow of the ebony clock, gasped in unutterable horror at finding the grave-cerements and corpse-like mask which they handled with so violent a rudeness, untenanted by any tangible form.

And now was acknowledged the presence of the Red Death. He had come like a thief in the night. And one by one dropped the revellers in the blood-bedewed halls of their revel, and died each in the despairing posture of his fall. And the life of the ebony clock went out with that of the last of the gay. And the flames of the tripods expired. And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all.

THE PURLOINED LETTER

(1844)

This "tale of ratiocination"—the third in which Poe's amateur detective, M. Dupin, appears—was first published in *The Gift* for 1845, which appeared late in the preceding year. The central situation in the story was borrowed by Victorien Sardou for his play, *Les Pattes de mouche*, produced on the British and American stage as *A Scrap of Paper*.

*Nil sapientiae odiosius acumine nimio*¹.

At Paris, just after dark one gusty evening in the autumn of 18—, I was enjoying the two-fold luxury of meditation and a meerschaum, in company with my friend C. Auguste Dupin, in his little back library, or book-closet, *au troisième*,² No. 33, Rue Dunôt, Faubourg St. Germain. For

¹ Nothing is more hateful to good sense than too much subtlety.

² On the third floor.

one hour at least we had maintained a profound silence, while each, to any casual observer, might have seemed intently and exclusively occupied with the curling eddies of smoke that oppressed the atmosphere of the chamber. For myself, however, I was mentally discussing certain topics which had formed matter for conversation between us at an earlier period of the evening; I mean the affair of the Rue Morgue, and the mystery attending the murder of Marie Rogêt. I looked upon it, therefore, as something of a coincidence, when the door of our apartment was thrown open and admitted our old acquaintance, Monsieur G—, the Prefect of the Parisian police.

We gave him a hearty welcome; for there was nearly half as much of the entertaining as of the contemptible about the man, and we had not seen him for several years. We had been sitting in the dark, and Dupin now arose for the purpose of lighting a lamp, but sat down again, without doing so, upon G.'s saying that he had called to consult us, or rather to ask the opinion of my friend, about some official business which had occasioned a great deal of trouble.

"If it is any point requiring reflection," observed Dupin, as he forbore to enkindle the wick, "we shall examine it to better purpose in the dark."

"That is another of your odd notions," said the Prefect, who had a fashion of calling everything "odd" that was beyond his comprehension, and thus lived amid an absolute legion of "oddities."

"Very true," said Dupin, as he supplied his visitor with a pipe, and rolled towards him a comfortable chair.

"And what is the difficulty now?" I asked. "Nothing more in the assassination way, I hope?"

"Oh no; nothing of that nature. The fact is, the business is *very* simple indeed, and I make no doubt that we can manage it sufficiently well ourselves; but then I thought Dupin would like to hear the details of it, because it is so excessively *odd*."

"Simple and odd," said Dupin.

"Why, yes; and not exactly that, either. The fact is, we have all been a good deal puzzled because the affair is so simple, and yet baffles us altogether."

"Perhaps it is the very simplicity of the thing which puts you at fault," said my friend.

"What nonsense you *do* talk!" replied the Prefect, laughing heartily

"Perhaps the mystery is a little *too* plain," said Dupin.

"Oh, good heavens! who ever heard of such an idea?"

"A little *too* self-evident."

"Ha! ha! ha!—ha! ha! ha!—ho! ho! ho!"—roared our visitor, profoundly amused, "oh, Dupin, you will be the death of me yet!"

"And what, after all, *is* the matter on hand?" I asked.

"Why, I will tell you," replied the Prefect, as he gave a long, steady, and contemplative puff, and settled himself in his chair. "I will tell you in a few words; but, before I begin, let me caution you that this is an affair demanding the greatest secrecy, and that I should most probably lose the position I now hold, were it known that I confided it to any one."

"Proceed," said I.

"Or not," said Dupin.

"Well, then; I have received personal information, from a very high quarter, that a certain document of the last importance, has been purloined from the royal apartments. The individual who purloined it is known; this beyond a doubt; he was seen to take it. It is known, also, that it still remains in his possession."

"How is this known?" asked Dupin.

"It is clearly inferred," replied the Prefect, "from the nature of the document, and from the non-appearance of certain results which would at once arise from its passing *out* of the robber's possession;—that is to say, from his employing it as he must design in the end to employ it."

"Be a little more explicit," I said.

"Well, I may venture so far as to say that the paper gives its holder a certain power in a certain quarter where such power is immensely valuable." The Prefect was fond of the cant of diplomacy.

"Still I do not quite understand," said Dupin.

"No? Well; the disclosure of the document to a third person, who shall be nameless, would bring in question the honor of a personage of most exalted station; and this fact gives the holder of the document an ascendancy over the illustrious personage whose honor and peace are so jeopardized."

"But this ascendancy," I interposed, "would

depend upon the robber's knowledge of the loser's knowledge of the robber. Who would dare—"

"The thief," said G., "is the Minister D—, who dares all things, those unbecoming as well as those becoming a man. The method of the theft was not less ingenious than bold. The document in question—a letter, to be frank—had been received by the personage robbed while alone in the royal *boudoir*. During its perusal she was suddenly interrupted by the entrance of the other exalted personage from whom especially it was her wish to conceal it. After a hurried and vain endeavor to thrust it in a drawer, she was forced to place it, open as it was, upon a table. The address, however, was uppermost, and, the contents thus unexposed, the letter escaped notice. At this juncture enters the Minister D—. His lynx eye immediately perceives the paper, recognizes the handwriting of the address, observes the confusion of the personage addressed, and fathoms her secret. After some business transactions, hurried through in his ordinary manner, he produces a letter somewhat similar to the one in question, opens it, pretends to read it, and then places it in close juxtaposition to the other. Again he converses, for some fifteen minutes, upon the public affairs. At length, in taking leave, he takes also from the table the letter to which he had no claim. Its rightful owner saw, but, of course, dared not call attention to the act, in the presence of the third personage who stood at her elbow. The Minister decamped; leaving his own letter—one of no importance—upon the table."

"Here, then," said Dupin to me, "you have precisely what you demand to make the ascendancy complete—the robber's knowledge of the loser's knowledge of the robber."

"Yes," replied the Prefect; "and the power thus attained has, for some months past, been wielded, for political purposes, to a very dangerous extent. The personage robbed is more thoroughly convinced, every day, of the necessity of reclaiming her letter. But this, of course, cannot be done openly. In fine, driven to despair, she has committed the matter to me."

"Than whom," said Dupin, amid a perfect whirlwind of smoke, "no more sagacious agent could, I suppose, be desired, or even imagined."

"You flatter me," replied the Prefect; "but it

is possible that some such opinion may have been entertained."

"It is clear," said I, "as you observe, that the letter is still in possession of the minister; since it is this possession, and not any employment of the letter, which bestows the power. With the employment the power departs."

"True," said G.; "and upon this conviction I proceeded. My first care was to make thorough search of the Minister's hotel,³ and here my chief embarrassment lay in the necessity of searching without his knowledge. Beyond all things, I have been warned of the danger which would result from giving him reason to suspect our design."

"But," said I, "you are quite *au fait* in these investigations. The Parisian police have done this thing often before."

"O, yes; and for this reason I did not despair. The habits of the Minister gave me, too, a great advantage. He is frequently absent from home all night. His servants are by no means numerous. They sleep at a distance from their master's apartment, and, being chiefly Neapolitans, are readily made drunk. I have keys, as you know, with which I can open any chamber or cabinet in Paris. For three months a night has not passed, during the greater part of which I have not been engaged, personally, in ransacking the D— Hôtel. My honor is interested, and, to mention a great secret, the reward is enormous. So I did not abandon the search until I had become fully satisfied that the thief is a more astute man than myself. I fancy that I have investigated every nook and corner of the premises in which it is possible that the paper can be concealed."

"But is it not possible," I suggested, "that although the letter may be in possession of the Minister, as it unquestionably is, he may have concealed it elsewhere than upon his own premises?"

"This is barely possible," said Dupin. "The present peculiar condition of affairs at court, and especially of those intrigues in which D— is known to be involved, would render the instant availability of the document—its susceptibility of being produced at a moment's notice—a point of nearly equal importance with its possession."

³ A large private house.

"Its susceptibility of being produced?" said I. "That is to say, of being *destroyed*," said Dupin.

"True," I observed, "the paper is clearly then upon the premises. As for its being upon the person of the Minister, we may consider that as out of the question."

"Entirely," said the Prefect. "He has been twice waylaid, as if by footpads, and his person rigorously searched under my own inspection."

"You might have spared yourself this trouble," said Dupin. "D—, I presume, is not altogether a fool, and, if not, must have anticipated these waylayings, as a matter of course."

"Not *altogether* a fool," said G., "but then he's a poet, which I take to be only one remove from a fool."

"True," said Dupin, after a long and thoughtful whiff from his meerschaum, "although I have been guilty of certain doggerel myself."

"Suppose you detail," said I, "the particulars of your search."

"Why, the fact is, we took our time, and we searched *every where*. I have had long experience in these affairs. I took the entire building, room by room, devoting the nights of a whole week to each. We examined, first, the furniture of each apartment. We opened every possible drawer; and I presume you know that, to a properly trained police agent, such a thing as a *secret* drawer is impossible. Any man is a dolt who permits a 'secret' drawer to escape him in a search of this kind. The thing is *so* plain. There is a certain amount of bulk—of space—to be accounted for in every cabinet. Then we have accurate rules. The fiftieth part of a line could not escape us. After the cabinets we took the chairs. The cushions we probed with the fine long needles you have seen me employ. From the tables we removed the tops."

"Why so?"

"Sometimes the top of a table, or other similarly arranged piece of furniture, is removed by the person wishing to conceal an article; then the leg is excavated, the article deposited within the cavity, and the top replaced. The bottoms and tops of bed-posts are employed in the same way."

"But could not the cavity be detected by sounding?" I asked.

"By no means, if, when the article is deposited, a sufficient wadding of cotton be placed around

it. Besides, in our case, we were obliged to proceed without noise."

"But you could not have removed—you could not have taken to pieces *all* articles of furniture in which it would have been possible to make a deposit in the manner you mention. A letter may be compressed into a thin spiral roll, not differing much in shape or bulk from a large knitting-needle, and in this form it might be inserted into the rung of a chair, for example. You did not take to pieces all the chairs?"

"Certainly not; but we did better—we examined the rungs of every chair in the hotel, and indeed, the jointing of every description of furniture, by the aid of a most powerful microscope. Had there been any traces of recent disturbance we should not have failed to detect it instantly. A single grain of gimlet-dust for example, would have been as obvious as an apple. Any disorder in the glueing—any unusual gaping in the joints—would have sufficed to insure detection."

"I presume you looked to the mirrors, between the boards and the plates, and you probed the beds and the bed-clothes, as well as the curtains and carpets."

"That of course; and when we had absolutely completed every particle of the furniture in this way, then we examined the house itself. We divided its entire surface into compartments, which we numbered, so that none might be missed; then we scrutinized each individual square inch throughout the premises, including the two houses immediately adjoining, with the microscope, as before."

"The two houses adjoining!" I exclaimed; "you must have had a great deal of trouble."

"We had; but the reward offered is prodigious."

"You include the *grounds* about the houses?"

"All the grounds are paved with brick. They gave us comparatively little trouble. We examined the moss between the bricks, and found it undisturbed."

"You looked among D—'s papers, of course, and into the books of the library?"

"Certainly; we opened every package and parcel; we not only opened every book, but we turned over every leaf in each volume, not contenting ourselves with a mere shake, according to the fashion of some of our police officers. We also measured the thickness of every book-

cover, with the most accurate admeasurement, and applied to each the most jealous scrutiny of the microscope. Had any of the bindings been recently meddled with, it would have been utterly impossible that the fact should have escaped observation. Some five or six volumes, just from the hands of the binder, we carefully probed, longitudinally, with the needles."

"You explored the floors beneath the carpets?"

"Beyond doubt. We removed every carpet, and examined the boards with the microscope."

"And the paper on the walls?"

"Yes."

"You looked into the cellars?"

"We did."

"Then," I said, "have you been making a miscalculation, and the letter is *not* upon the premises, as you suppose?"

"I fear you are right there," said the Prefect.

"And now, Dupin, what would you advise me to do?"

"To make a thorough re-search of the premises."

"That is absolutely needless," replied G—.

"I am not more sure that I breathe than I am that the letter is not at the Hôtel."

"I have no better advice to give you," said Dupin. "You have, of course, an accurate description of the letter?"

"Oh yes!"—And here the Prefect, producing a memorandum-book, proceeded to read aloud a minute account of the internal, and especially of the external appearance of the missing document. Soon after finishing the perusal of this description, he took his departure, more entirely depressed in spirits than I had ever known the good gentleman before.

In about a month afterwards he paid us another visit, and found us occupied very nearly as before. He took a pipe and a chair and entered into some ordinary conversation. At length I said,—

"Well, but G—, what of the purloined letter? I presume you have at last made up your mind that there is no such thing as overreaching the Minister?"

"Confound him, say I—yes; I made the re-examination, however, as Dupin suggested—but it was all labor lost, as I knew it would be."

"How much was the reward offered, did you say?" asked Dupin.

"Why, a very great deal—a *very* liberal reward—I don't like to say how much, precisely; but one thing I *will* say, that I wouldn't mind giving my individual check for fifty thousand francs to any one who could obtain me that letter. The fact is, it is becoming of more and more importance every day; and the reward has been lately doubled. If it were trebled, however, I could do no more than I have done."

"Why, yes," said Dupin, drawlingly, between the whiffs of his meerschaum, "I really—think, G—, you have not exerted yourself—to the utmost in this matter. You might—do a little more, I think, eh?"

"How?—in what way?"

"Why—puff, puff—you might—puff, puff—employ counsel in the matter, eh?—puff, puff, puff. Do you remember the story they tell of Abernethy?"

"No: hang Abernethy!"

"To be sure! hang him and welcome. But, once upon a time, a certain rich miser conceived the design of spunging upon this Abernethy for a medical opinion. Getting up, for this purpose, an ordinary conversation in a private company, he insinuated his case to the physician, as that of an imaginary individual.

"'We will suppose,' said the miser, 'that his symptoms are such and such; now, doctor, what would you have directed him to take?'"

"'Take!' said Abernethy, 'why, take *advice*, to be sure.'"

"But," said the Prefect, a little discomposed, "I am *perfectly* willing to take advice, and to pay for it. I would *really* give fifty thousand francs to any one who would aid me in the matter."

"In that case," replied Dupin, opening a drawer, and producing a check-book "you may as well fill me up a check for the amount mentioned. When you have signed it, I will hand you the letter."

I was astounded. The Prefect appeared absolutely thunder-stricken. For some minutes he remained speechless and motionless, looking incredulously at my friend with open mouth, and eyes that seemed starting from their sockets; then, apparently recovering himself in some measure, he seized a pen, and after several pauses and vacant stares, finally filled up and signed a check for fifty thousand francs, and handed it across the table to Dupin. The latter examined it carefully and deposited it in his pocket-book;

then, unlocking an *escritoire*, took thence a letter and gave it to the Prefect. This functionary grasped it in a perfect agony of joy, opened it with a trembling hand, cast a rapid glance at its contents, and then, scrambling and struggling to the door, rushed at length unceremoniously from the room and from the house, without having uttered a syllable since Dupin had requested him to fill up the check.

When he had gone, my friend entered into some explanations. "The Parisian police," he said, "are exceedingly able in their way. They are persevering, ingenious, cunning, and thoroughly versed in the knowledge which their duties seem chiefly to demand. Thus, when G— detailed to us his mode of searching the premises at the Hôtel D—, I felt entire confidence in his having made a satisfactory investigation—so far as his labors extended."

"So far as his labors extended?" said I.

"Yes," said Dupin. "The measures adopted were not only the best of their kind, but carried out to absolute perfection. Had the letter been deposited within the range of their search, these fellows would, beyond a question, have found it."

I merely laughed—but he seemed quite serious in all that he said.

"The measures, then," he continued, "were good in their kind, and well executed; their defect lay in their being inapplicable to the case, and to the man. A certain set of highly ingenious resources are, with the Prefect, a sort of Procrustean bed, to which he forcibly adapts his designs. But he perpetually errs by being too deep or too shallow, for the matter in hand; and many a schoolboy is a better reasoner than he. I knew one about eight years of age, whose success at guessing in the game of 'even and odd' attracted universal admiration. This game is simple, and is played with marbles. One player holds in his hand a number of these toys, and demands of another whether that number is even or odd. If the guess is right, the guesser wins one; if wrong, he loses one. The boy to whom I allude won all the marbles of the school. Of course he had some principle of guessing; and this lay in mere observation and admeasurement of the astuteness of his opponents. For example, an arrant simpleton is his opponent, and, holding up his closed hand, asks, 'are they even or

odd?' Our school boy replies, 'odd, and loses; but upon the second trial he wins, for he then says to himself, 'the simpleton had them even upon the first trial, and his amount of cunning is just sufficient to make him have them odd upon the second; I will therefore guess odd,'—he guesses odd, and wins. Now, with a simpleton a degree above the first, he would have reasoned thus. 'This fellow finds that in the first instance I guessed odd, and, in the second, he will propose to himself, upon the first impulse, a simple variation from even to odd, and as did the first simpleton; but then a second thought will suggest that this is too simple a variation, and finally he will decide upon putting it even as before. I will therefore guess even;'—he guesses even, and wins. Now this mode of reasoning in the schoolboy, whom his fellows termed 'lucky,'—what, in its last analysis, is it?"

"It is merely," I said, "an identification of the reasoner's intellect with that of his opponent."

"It is," said Dupin, "and, upon inquiring of the boy by what means he effected the *thorough* identification in which his success consisted, I received answer as follows: 'When I wish to find out how wise, or how stupid, or how good, or how wicked is any one, or what are his thoughts at the moment, I fashion the expression of my face, as accurately as possible, in accordance with the expression of his, and then wait to see what thoughts or sentiments arise in my mind or heart, as if to match or correspond with the expression.' This response of the schoolboy lies at the bottom of all the spurious profundity which has been attributed to Rochefoucauld, to La Bougive, to Machiavelli, and to Campanella."

"And the identification," I said, "of the reasoner's intellect with that of his opponent, depends, if I understand you aright, upon the accuracy with which the opponent's intellect is admeasured."

"For its practical value it depends upon this," replied Dupin; "and the Prefect and his cohort failed so frequently, first, by default of this identification, and, secondly, by ill-admeasurement, or rather through non-admeasurement, of the intellect with which they are engaged. They consider only their *own* ideas of ingenuity; and, in searching for anything hidden, advert only to the modes in which *they* would have hidden

it. They are right in this much—that their own ingenuity is a faithful representative of that of *the mass*, but when the cunning of the individual felon is diverse in character from their own, the felon foils them, of course. This always happens when it is above their own, and very usually when it is below. They have no variation of principle in their investigations; at best, when urged by some unusual emergency—by some extraordinary reward—they extend or exaggerate their old modes of *practice*, without touching their principles. What, for example, in this case of D—, has been done to vary the principle of action? What is all this boring, and probing, and sounding, and scrutinizing with the microscope, and dividing the surface of the building into registered square inches— what is it all but an exaggeration of the *application* of the one principle or set of principles of search, which are based upon the one set of notions regarding human ingenuity, to which the Prefect, in the long routine of his duty, has been accustomed? Do you not see he has taken it for granted that *all* men proceed to conceal a letter,—not exactly in a gimlet-hole bored in a chair-leg—but, at least, in *some* out-of-the-way hole or corner suggested by the same tenor of thought which would urge a man to secrete a letter in a gimlet-hole bored in a chair-leg? And do you not see also, that such *recherchés* nooks for concealment are adapted only for ordinary occasions, and would be adopted only by ordinary intellects; for, in all cases of concealment, a disposal of the article concealed—a disposal of it in this *recherche* manner,— is, in the very first instance, presumable and presumed; and thus its discovery depends, not at all upon the acumen, but all together upon the mere care, patience, and determination of the seekers; and where the case is of importance—or, what amounts to the same thing in the policial eyes, when the reward is of magnitude—the qualities in question have *never* been known to fail. You will now understand what I meant in suggesting that, had the purloined letter been hidden anywhere within the limits of the Prefect's examination—in other words, had the principle of its concealment been comprehended within the principles of the Prefect—its discovery would have been a matter altogether beyond question. This functionary however, has been thoroughly mystified; and the remote source of his defeat

lies in the supposition that the Minister is a fool, because he has acquired renown as a poet. All fools are poets; this the Prefect *feels*, and he is merely guilty of a *non distributio medii* in thence inferring that all poets are fools."

"But is this really the poet?" I asked "There are two brothers, I know, and both have attained reputation in letters. The Minister I believe has written learnedly on the Differential Calculus. He is a mathematician and no poet."

"You are mistaken; I know him well; he is both. As poet *and* mathematician, he would reason well; as mere mathematician, he could not have reasoned at all, and thus would have been at the mercy of the Prefect."

"You surprise me," I said, "by these opinions, which have been contradicted by the voice of the world. You do not mean to set at naught the well-digested idea of centuries. The mathematical reason has long been regarded as *the* reason *par excellence*."

"*Il y a à parier*," replied Dupin, quoting from Chamfort, "*que toute idée publique, toute convention reçue, est une sottise, car elle a convenue au plus grand nombre.*"⁴ The mathematicians, I grant you, have done their best to promulgate the popular error to which you allude, and which is none the less an error for its promulgation as truth. With an art worthy a better cause, for example, they have insinuated the term 'analysis' into application to algebra. The French are the originators of this particular deception; but if a term is of any importance—if words derive any value from applicability—then 'analysis' conveys 'algebra' about as much as, in Latin, '*ambitus*' implies 'ambition,' '*religio*' 'religion,' or '*homines honesti*' a set of honorable men."

"You have a quarrel on hand, I see," said I, "with some of the algebraists of Paris; but proceed."

"I dispute the availability, and thus the value, of that reason which is cultivated in any special form other than the abstractly logical. I dispute, in particular, the reason educed by mathematical study. The mathematics are the science of form and quantity; mathematical reasoning is merely logic applied to observation upon form

and quantity. The great error lies in supposing that even the truths of what is called *pure* algebra, are abstract or general truths. And this error is so egregious that I am confounded at the universality with which it has been received. Mathematical axioms are *not* axioms of general truth. What is true of *relation*—of form and quantity—is often grossly false in regard to morals, for example. In this latter science it is very usually *untrue* that the aggregated parts are equal to the whole. In chemistry also the axiom fails. In the consideration of motive it fails; for two motives, each of a given value, have not, necessarily, a value when united, equal to the sum of their values apart. There are numerous other mathematical truths which are only truths within the limits of *relation*. But the mathematician argues, from his *finite truths*, through habit, as if they were of an absolutely general applicability—as the world indeed imagines them to be. Bryant, in his very learned 'Mythology,' mentions an analogous source of error, when he says that 'although the Pagan fables are not believed, yet we forget ourselves continually, and make inferences from them as existing realities.' With the algebraists, however, who are Pagans themselves, the 'Pagan fables' *are* believed, and the inferences are made, not so much through lapse of memory, as though an unaccountable addling of the brains. In short, I never yet encountered the mere mathematician who could be trusted out of equal roots, or one who did not clandestinely hold it as a point of his faith that $x^2 + px$ was absolutely and unconditionally equal to q . Say to one of these gentlemen, by the way of experiment, if you please, that you believe occasions may occur where $x^2 + px$ is *not* altogether equal to q , and, having made him understand what you mean, get out of his reach as speedily as convenient, for, beyond doubt, he will endeavor to knock you down.

"I mean to say," continued Dupin, while I merely laugh at his last observations. "that if the Minister had been no more than a mathematician, the Prefect would have been under no necessity of giving me this check. I knew him, however, as both mathematician and poet, and my measures were adapted to his capacity, with reference to the circumstances by which he was surrounded. I knew him as a courtier, too, and as a bold *intrigant*. Such a man, I considered, could not fail to be aware of the ordinary poli-

⁴ The chances are that every public idea, every convention agreed upon, is folly since the majority has agreed to it.

cial modes of action. He could not have failed to anticipate—and events have proved that he did not fail to anticipate—the waylayings to which he was subjected. He must have foreseen, I reflected, the secret investigations of his premises. His frequent absences from home at night, which were hailed by the Prefect as certain aids to his success, I regarded only as *ruses*, to afford opportunity for thorough search to the police, and thus the sooner to impress them with the conviction to which G—, in fact, did finally arrive—the conviction that the letter was not upon the premises I felt, also, that the whole train of thought, which I was at some pains in detailing to you just now, concerning the invariable principle of policial action in searches for articles concealed—I felt this whole train of thought would necessarily pass through the mind of the Minister. It would imperatively lead him to despise all the ordinary *nooks* of concealment. He could not, I reflected, be so weak as not to see that the most intricate and remote recess of his hotel would be as open as his commonest closets to the eyes, to the probes, to the gimlets, and to the microscopes of the Prefect. I saw, in fine that he would be driven, as a matter of course, to *simplicity*, if not deliberately induced to it as a matter of choice. You will remember, perhaps, how desperately the Prefect laughed when I suggested, upon our first interview, that it was just possible this mystery troubled him so much on account of its being so *very* self-evident.”

“Yes,” said I, “I remember his merriment well. I really thought he would have fallen into convulsions.”

“The material world,” continued Dupin, “abounds with very strict analogies to the immaterial; and thus some color of truth has been given to the rhetorical dogma, that metaphor, or simile, may be made to strengthen an argument, as well as to embellish a description. The principle of the *vis inertiae*, for example, seems to be identical in physics and metaphysics. It is not more true in the former, that a large body is with more difficulty set in motion than a smaller one, and that its subsequent *momentum* is commensurate with this difficulty, than it is, in the latter, that intellects of the vaster capacity, while more forcible, more constant, and more eventful in their movements than those

of inferior grade, are yet the less readily moved, and more embarrassed and full of hesitation in the first few steps of their progress. Again: have you ever noticed which of the street signs, over the shop doors, are the most attractive of attention?”

“I have never given the matter a thought,” I said.

“There is a game of puzzles,” he resumed, “which is played upon a map. One party playing requires another to find a given word—the name of town, river, state or empire—any word, in short, upon the motley and perplexed surface of the chart. A novice in the game generally seeks to embarrass his opponents by giving them the most minutely lettered names; but the adept selects such words as stretch, in large characters, from one end of the chart to the other. These, like the over-largely lettered signs and placards of the street, escape observation by dint of being excessively obvious; and here the physical oversight is precisely analogous with the moral inapprehension by which the intellect suffers to pass unnoticed those considerations which are too obtrusively and too palpably self-evident. But this is a point, it appears, somewhat above or beneath the understanding of the Prefect. He never once thought it probable, or possible, that the Minister had deposited the letter immediately beneath the nose of the whole world, by way of best preventing any portion of that world from perceiving it.

“But the more I reflected upon the daring, dashing, and discriminating ingenuity of D—; upon the fact that the document must always have been *at hand*, if he intended to use it to good purpose; and upon the decisive evidence, obtained by the Prefect, that it was not hidden within the limits of that dignitary’s ordinary search—the more satisfied I became that, to conceal this letter, the Minister had resorted to the comprehensive and sagacious expedient of not attempting to conceal it at all.

“Full of these ideas, I prepared myself with a pair of green spectacles, and called one fine morning, quite by accident, at the Ministerial hotel. I found D— at home, yawning, lounging, and dawdling, as usual, and pretending to be in the last extremity of *ennui*. He is, perhaps, the most really energetic human being now alive—but that is only when nobody sees him.

"To be even with him, I complained of my weak eyes, and lamented the necessity of the spectacles, under cover of which I cautiously and thoroughly surveyed the apartment, while seemingly intent only upon the conversation of my host.

"I paid especial attention to a large writing table near which he sat, and upon which lay confusedly, some miscellaneous letters and other papers, with one or two musical instruments and a few books. Here, however, after a long and very deliberate scrutiny, I saw nothing to excite particular suspicion.

"At length my eyes, in going the circuit of the room, fell upon a trumpery filigree card-rack of paste-board, that hung dangling by a dirty blue ribbon from a little brass knob just beneath the middle of the mantel-piece. In this rack, which had three or four compartments, were five or six visiting cards and a solitary letter. This last was much soiled and crumpled. It was torn nearly in two, across the middle—as if a design, in the first instance, to tear it entirely up as worthless, had been altered, or stayed, in the second. It had a large black seal, bearing the D— cipher *very* conspicuously, and was addressed, in a diminutive female hand, to D—, the Minister himself. It was thrust carelessly, and even, as it seemed, contemptuously, into one of the upper divisions of the rack.

"No sooner had I glanced at this letter, than I concluded it to be that of which I was in search. To be sure, it was, to all appearance, radically different from the one of which the Prefect had read us so minute a description. Here the seal was large and black, with the D— cipher; there it was small and red, with the ducal arms of the S— family. Here, the address, to the Minister, was diminutive and feminine; there the superscription, to a certain royal personage, was markedly bold and decided; the size alone formed a point of correspondence. But, then the *radicalness* of these differences, which was excessive; the dirt; the soiled and torn condition of the paper, so inconsistent with the *true* methodical habits of D—, and so suggestive of a design to delude the beholder into an idea of the worthlessness of the document; these things, together with the hyperobstrusive situation of this document, full in the view of every visitor, and thus exactly in accordance

with the conclusions to which I had previously arrived, these things, I say, were strongly corroborative of suspicion, in one who came with the intention to suspect.

"I protracted my visit as long as possible, and, while I maintained a most animated discussion with the Minister, on a topic which I knew well had never failed to interest and excite him, I kept my attention really riveted upon the letter. In this examination, I committed to memory its external appearance and arrangement in the rack; and also fell, at length, upon a discovery which set at rest whatever trivial doubt I might have entertained. In scrutinizing the edges of the paper, I observed them to be more *chafed* than seemed necessary. They presented the *broken* appearance which is manifested when a stiff paper, having been once folded and pressed with a folder, is re-folded in a reversed direction, in the same creases or edges which had formed the original fold. This discovery was sufficient. It was clear to me that the letter had been turned, as a glove, inside out, re-directed, and re-sealed. I bade the Minister good morning, and took my departure at once, leaving a gold snuff-box upon the table.

"The next morning I called for the snuff-box, when we resumed, quite eagerly, the conversation of the preceding day. While thus engaged, however, a loud report, as if of a pistol, was heard immediately beneath the windows of the hotel, and was succeeded by a series of fearful screams, and the shoutings of a mob. D— rushed to a casement, threw it open, and looked out. In the meantime, I stepped to the card-rack, took the letter, put it in my pocket, and replaced it by a *fac-simile*, (so far as regards externals,) which I had carefully prepared at my lodgings, imitating the D— cipher, very readily, by means of a seal formed of bread.

"The disturbance in the street had been occasioned by the frantic behavior of a man with a musket. He had fired it among a crowd of women and children. It proved, however, to have been without ball, and the fellow was suffered to go his way as a lunatic or a drunkard. When he had gone, D— came from the window, whither I had followed him immediately upon securing the object in view. Soon

afterwards I bade him farewell. The pretended lunatic was a man in my own pay."

"But what purpose had you," I asked, "in replacing the letter by a *fac-simile*? Would it not have been better, at the first visit, to have seized it openly, and departed?"

"D—," replied Dupin, "is a desperate man, and a man of nerve. His hotel, too, is not without attendants devoted to his interests. Had I made the wild attempt you suggest, I might never have left the Ministerial presence alive. The good people of Paris might have heard of me no more. But I had an object apart from these considerations. You know my political prepossessions. In this matter, I act as a partisan of the lady concerned. For eighteen months the Minister has had her in his power. She has now him in hers—since, being unaware that the letter is not in his possession, he will proceed with his exactions as if it was. Thus will he inevitably commit himself, at once, to his political destruction. His downfall, too, will not be more precipitate than awkward. It is all very well to talk about the *facilis descensus Averni*,⁵ but in all kinds of climbing, as Catalani said of singing, it is far more easy to get up than to come down. In the present instance I have no sympathy—at least no pity—for him who descends. He is that *monstrum horrendum*,⁶ an unprincipled man of genius. I confess, however, that I should like very well to know the precise character of his thoughts, when, being defied by her whom the Prefect terms 'a certain personage,' he is reduced to opening the letter which I left for him in the card-rack."

"How? did you put anything particular in it?"

"Why—it did not seem altogether right to leave the interior blank—that would have been insulting. D—, at Vienna once, did me an evil turn, which I told him quite good-humoredly, that I should remember. So, as I knew he would feel some curiosity in regard to the identity of the person who had outwitted him, I thought it a pity not to give a clue. He is well acquainted with my MS., and I just copied into the middle of the blank sheet the words—

⁵ Easy is the descent to Avernus (the infernal regions).

⁶ Horrible monstrosity. This and the preceding quotation are from Vergil's *Aeneid*.

'— *Un dessein si funeste,
S'il n'est digne d'Atreé, est, digne de Thyeste.*'⁷
They are to be found in Crébillon's *Atreé*.⁸

THE PHILOSOPHY OF COMPOSITION

(1846)

This essay is perhaps the most remarkable analysis of a poem ever written. It is, however, not to be taken literally. "The Raven" had proved an extraordinarily popular poem. Everywhere he went Poe was asked how he wrote the poem. His answer is in a sense a feature story. It was first published in *Graham's Magazine* for April, 1846, something over a year after "The Raven." The author of a best-seller today has more chances to capitalize on a successful piece of writing than Poe had; but, like a born journalist, he made the most of what opportunities he had. Hervey Allen, a poet as well as Poe's biographer, writes:

"Poe's own explanation of how the poem was concocted . . . is, in the final analysis, not an explanation at all. It was simply his own effort to rationalize upon, and to make apparently logical to himself, his own creative processes. This critical essay was part of his attempt to project himself as the almighty reasoner, as it was also part of his propaganda for making *The Raven* popular. People asked him the question, 'Mr. Poe, how did you write *The Raven*?' The essay is a *perfectly reasonable* reply. Instead of falling back on the old theory of mysterious and divine inspiration, which has ever been the poet's method of dodging self-analysis, Poe, by his reply, not only silenced the Philistines but also added to his reputation as a logical genius. . . ."

"There is this, however, to be said. The long period over which the composition of *The Raven* stretched, a period of four years at least, shows that, into the arrangement and composition of it, went a great deal of critical thinking, artistic analysis, a logical arrangement of effects, and a painstaking construction of the spinal narrative which no mere emotion could have provided."

Allen's opinion somewhat resembles that of another poet-critic, Edmund Clarence Stedman, who said, "I have accepted his analysis of *The Raven* as more than half true."

Several things prevent one from accepting Poe's

⁷ A plan so mournful, if not worthy of Atreus, is worthy of Thyestes.

⁸ Prosper Jolyot de Crébillon (1674-1762) produced his *Atreé* in 1707.

account completely. He makes no reference to the works of other writers which almost certainly influenced him: Dickens's *Barnaby Rudge*, Mrs. Browning's "Lady Geraldine's Courtship," the poems of Thomas Holley Chivers, etc. One notes, too, that in Poe's earlier poems appears his favorite topic, the death of a beautiful woman. Earlier poems conform also to his ideas of the proper length of a poem. These conceptions at least were not first worked out in "The Raven."

Other accounts of how poems are written stress a matter which Poe never mentions—the part played by the subconscious mind. The curious student should consult Marguerite Wilkinson's *The Way of the Makers* and *New Voices* (which includes a section on "How Poems are Made"), Mary Austin's *Everyman's Genius*, F. C. Prescott's *The Poetic Mind*, Conrad Aiken's "The Mechanism of Poetic Inspiration" (in his *Scepticisms*), Wilbur L. Cross, "The Act of Composition," in the *Atlantic Monthly* for May, 1906; and Lane Cooper's *Methods and Aims in the Study of Literature* (Section IV). In a suggestive little volume *On English Poetry* (Chap. XVIII) the English poet Robert Graves has tried to point out the experiences which underlie one of his own poems, "The General Elliott."

Poe's lecture, "The Poetic Principle," not included in this anthology, throws further light upon his conception of poetry. Note the following extracts:

" . . . I would define, in brief, the Poetry of words as *The Rhythmical Creation of Beauty*. Its sole arbiter is Taste. With the Intellect or with the Conscience, it has only collateral relations. Unless incidentally, it has no concern whatever either with Duty or with Truth."

" . . . a heresy too palpably false to be long tolerated, but one which, in the brief period it has already endured, may be said to have accomplished more in the corruption of our Poetical Literature than all its other enemies combined. I allude to the heresy of *The Didactic*. It has been assumed, tacitly and avowedly, directly and indirectly, that the ultimate object of all Poetry is Truth. Every poem, it is said, should inculcate a moral; and by this moral is the poetical merit of the work to be adjudged. We Americans especially have patronized this happy idea; and we Bostonians, very especially, have developed it in full. We have taken it into our heads that to write a poem simply for the poem's sake, and to acknowledge such to have been our design, would be to confess ourselves radically wanting in the true Poetic dignity and force:—but the simple fact is, that, would we but permit ourselves to look into our own souls, we should immediately there discover that under the sun there neither exists nor can exist any work more thoroughly dignified—

more supremely noble than this very poem—this poem *per se*—this poem which is a poem and nothing more—this poem written solely for the poem's sake."

Charles Dickens, in a note now lying before me, alluding to an examination I once made of the mechanism of "Barnaby Rudge,"¹ says—"By the way, are you aware that Godwin wrote his 'Caleb Williams' backwards?"² He first involved his hero in a web of difficulties, forming the second volume, and then, for the first, cast about him for some mode of accounting for what had been done."

I cannot think this the *precise* mode of procedure on the part of Godwin—and indeed what he himself acknowledges,³ is not altogether in accordance with Mr. Dickens' idea—but the author of "Caleb Williams" was too good an artist not to perceive the advantage derivable from at least a somewhat similar process. Nothing is more clear than that every plot, worth the name, must be elaborated to its *dénouement* before anything be attempted with the pen. It is only with the *dénouement* constantly in view that we can give a plot its indispensable air of consequence, or causation, by making the incidents, and especially the tone at all points, tend to the development of the intention.⁴

There is a radical error, I think, in the usual mode of constructing a story. Either history affords a thesis—or one is suggested by an incident of the day—or, at best, the author sets himself to work in the combination of striking events to form merely the basis of his narrative—designing, generally, to fill in with description, dialogue, or aural comment, whatever crevices of fact, or action, may, from page to page, render themselves apparent.

¹ Note that Poe makes no mention of the raven in Dickens's novel which perhaps is the real starting point for "The Raven."

² The last stanza of Wordsworth's "We are Seven" was written first, and the last stanza, composed by Coleridge, was written first.

³ In his preface William Godwin says: ". . . I invented first the third volume of my tale, then the second, and last of all the first."

⁴ Cf. Robert Louis Stevenson, writing to a friend who had suggested changing the conclusion of one of his short stories: "To make another end, that is to make the beginning all wrong . . . the body and end of a short-story is bone of the bone and blood of the blood of the beginning" (*Vailima Letters*, I, 147).

I prefer commencing with the consideration of an *effect*. Keeping originality *always* in view—for he is false to himself who ventures to dispense with so obvious and so easily attainable a source of interest—I say to myself, in the first place,—“Of the innumerable effects, or impressions, of which the heart, the intellect, or (more generally) the soul is susceptible, what one shall I, on the present occasion, select?” Having chosen a novel, first, and secondly a vivid effect, I consider whether it can be best wrought by incident or tone—whether by ordinary incidents and peculiar tone, or the converse, or by peculiarity both of incident and tone—afterward looking about me (or rather within) for such combinations of event, or tone, as shall best aid me in the construction of the effect.

I have often thought how interesting a magazine paper might be written by any author who would—that is to say who could—detail, step by step, the processes by which any one of his compositions attained its ultimate point of completion. Why such a paper has never been given to the world, I am much at a loss to say—but, perhaps, the autorial vanity has had more to do with the omission than any one other cause. Most writers—poets in especial—prefer having it understood that they compose by a species of fine frenzy—an ecstatic intuition—and would positively shudder at letting the public take a peep behind the scenes, at the elaborate and vacillating crudities of thought, at the true purposes seized only at the last moment—at the innumerable glimpses of idea that arrive not at the maturity of full view—at the fully matured fancies discarded in despair as unmanageable—at the cautious selections and rejections—at the painful erasures and interpolations—in a word, at the wheels and pinions—the tackle for scene-shifting—the step-ladders and demon-traps—the cock’s feathers, the red paint and the black patches, which, in ninety-nine cases out of the hundred, constitute the properties of the literary *histrio*.

I am aware, on the other hand, that the case is by no means common, in which an author is at all in condition to retrace the steps by which his conclusions have been attained. In general, suggestions, having arisen pell-mell, are pursued and forgotten in a similar manner.

For my own part, I have neither sympathy

with the repugnance alluded to, nor, at any time the least difficulty in recalling to mind the progressive steps of any of my compositions, and, since the interest of an analysis, or reconstruction, such as I have considered a *desideratum*, is quite independent of any real or fancied interest in the thing analyzed, it will not be regarded as a breach of decorum on my part to show the *modus operandi* by which some one of my own works was put together. I select “The Raven,” as most generally known. It is my design to render it manifest that no one point in its composition is referable either to accident or intuition—that the work proceeded, step by step, to its completion with the precision and rigid consequence of a mathematical problem.⁵

Let us dismiss, as irrelevant to the poem, *per se*, the circumstance—or say the necessity—which, in the first place, gave rise to the intention of composing a poem that should suit at critical taste.⁶

We commence, then, with this intention.

The initial consideration was that of extent. If any literary work is too long to be read at one sitting, we must be content to dispense with the immensely important effect derivable from unity of impression—for, if two sittings be required, the affairs of the world interfere, and everything like totality is at once destroyed. But since, *ceteris paribus*, no poet can afford to dispense with *anything* that may advance his design, it but remains to be seen whether there is, in extent, any advantage to counterbalance the loss of unity which attends it. Here I say no, at once. What we term a long poem is, in fact, merely a succession of brief ones—that is to say, of brief poetical effects. It is needless to demonstrate that a poem is such, only inasmuch as it intensely excites, by elevating, the soul; and all intense excitements are, through a psychal necessity, brief. For this reason, at least one half of the “Paradise Lost” is essentially prose—a succession of poetical excitements

⁵ This gives the clue to the “effect” which Poe aimed at in this essay.

⁶ “The Raven” and Gray’s “Elegy” are among the few poems in English which “suit at once the popular and the critical taste.” Knowing that until the publication of “The Raven,” Poe’s criticisms and stories were better known than his poems, one may well doubt any expectation on his part that “The Raven” would be popular.

interspersed, *inevitably*, with corresponding depressions—the whole being deprived, through the extremeness of its length, of the vastly important artistic element, totality, or unity, of effect.⁷

It appears evident, then, that there is a distinct limit, as regards length, to all works of literary art—the limit of a single sitting—and that, although in certain classes of prose composition, such as “Robinson Crusoe” (demanding no unity), this limit may be advantageously overpassed, it can never properly be overpassed in a poem. Within this limit, the extent of a poem may be made to bear mathematical relation to its merit—in other words, to the excitement or elevation—again in other words, to the degree of the true poetical effect which it is capable of inducing; for it is clear that the brevity must be in direct ratio of the intensity of the intended effect:—this, with one proviso—that a certain degree of duration is absolutely requisite for the production of any effect at all.⁸

Holding in view these considerations, as well as that degree of excitement which I deemed not above the popular, while not below the critical, taste, I reached at once what I conceived the proper *length* for my intended poem—a length of about one hundred lines. It is, in fact, a hundred and eight.

My next thought concerned the choice of an impression, or effect, to be conveyed; and here I may as well observe that, throughout the construction, I kept steadily in view the design of rendering the work *universally* appreciable. I should be carried too far out of my immediate topic were I to demonstrate a point upon which I have repeatedly insisted, and which, with the poetical, stands not in the slightest need of demonstration—the point, I

mean, that Beauty is the sole legitimate province of the poem. A few words, however, in elucidation of my real meaning, which some of my friends have evinced a disposition to misrepresent. That pleasure which is at once the most intense, the most elevating, and the most pure, is, I believe, found in the contemplation of the beautiful. When, indeed, men speak of Beauty, they mean, precisely, not a quality, as is supposed, but an effect—they refer, in short, just to that intense and pure elevation of *soul*—not of intellect, or of heart—upon which I have commented, and which is experienced in consequence of contemplating “the beautiful.” Now I designate Beauty as the province of the poem, merely because it is an obvious rule of Art that effects should be made to spring from direct causes—that objects should be attained through means best adapted for their attainment—no one as yet having been weak enough to deny that the peculiar elevation alluded to is *most readily* attained in the poem. Now the object, Truth, or the satisfaction of the intellect, and the object Passion, or the excitement of the heart, are, although attainable, to a certain extent, in poetry, far more readily attainable in prose. Truth, in fact, demands a precision, and Passion a *homeliness* (the truly passionate will comprehend me) which are absolutely antagonistic to that Beauty which, I maintain, is the excitement, or pleasurable elevation, of the soul. It by no means follows from anything here said, that passion, or even truth, may not be introduced, and even profitably introduced, into a poem—for they may serve in elucidation, or aid the general effect, as do discords in music, by contrast—but the true artist will always contrive, first, to tone them into proper subservience to the predominant aim, and, secondly, to enveil them, as far as possible, in that Beauty which is the atmosphere and the essence of the poem.

Regarding, then, Beauty as my province, my next question referred to the *tone* of its highest manifestation—and all experience has shown that this tone is one of *sadness*.⁹ Beauty of whatever kind, in its supreme development, invariably excites the sensitive soul to tears.

⁹ Cf. Shelley's “To a Skylark”:

“Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.”

⁷ For an effective reply to Poe's contention in regard to *Paradise Lost*, see Henry Timrod, “A Theory of Poetry,” *Atlantic Monthly*, XCVI, 313-326 (September, 1905).

⁸ In his life of Bryant (I, 186 n.) Parke Godwin quotes John Bigelow as saying: “Bryant never wrote any long poems. I once asked him why. He replied: ‘There is no such thing as a long poem.’ His theory was that a long poem was as impossible as a long ecstasy; that what is called a long poem, like ‘Paradise Lost’ and the ‘Divine Comedy,’ is a mere succession of poems strung together upon a thread of verse, the thread of verse serving sometimes to popularize them to a wider range of literary taste or a more sluggish intellectual digestion.”

Melancholy is thus the most legitimate of all the poetical tones.

The length, the province, and the tone, being thus determined, I betook myself to ordinary induction, with the view of obtaining some artistic piquancy which might serve me as a key-note in the construction of the poem—some pivot upon which the whole structure might turn. In carefully thinking over all the usual artistic effects—or more properly *points*, in the theatrical sense—I did not fail to perceive immediately that no one had been so universally employed as that of the *refrain*.¹⁰ The universality of its employment sufficed to assure me of its intrinsic value, and spared me the necessity of submitting it to analysis. I considered it, however, with regard to its susceptibility of improvement, and soon saw it to be in a primitive condition. As commonly used, the *refrain*, or burden, not only is limited to lyric verse, but depends for its impression upon the force of monotone—both in sound and thought. The pleasure is deduced solely from the sense of identity—of repetition. I resolved to diversify, and so heighten, the effect, by adhering, in general, to the monotone of sound, while I continually varied that of thought: that is to say, I determined to produce continuously novel effects, by the variation of the application of the *refrain*—the *refrain* itself remaining, for the most part, unvaried.

These points being settled, I next bethought me of the nature of my *refrain*. Since its application was to be repeatedly varied, it was clear that the *refrain* itself must be brief, for there would have been an insurmountable difficulty in frequent variations of application in any sentence of length. In proportion to the brevity of the sentence, would, of course, be the facility of the variation. This led me at once to a single word as the best *refrain*.

The question now arose as to the character of the word. Having made up my mind to a *refrain*, the division of the poem into stanzas was, of course, a corollary; the *refrain* forming the close to each stanza. That such a close, to have force, must be sonorous and susceptible of protracted emphasis, admitted no doubt; and these considerations, inevitably led me to

the long *o* as the most sonorous vowel, in connection with *r* as the most producible consonant.¹¹

The sound of the *refrain* being thus determined, it became necessary to select a word embodying this sound, and at the same time in the fullest possible keeping with that melancholy which I had predetermined as the tone of the poem. In such a search it would have been absolutely impossible to overlook the word "Nevermore." In fact, it was the very first which presented itself.

The next *desideratum* was a pretext for the continuous use of the one word "never more." In observing the difficulty which I at once found in inventing a sufficiently plausible reason for its continuous repetition, I did not fail to perceive that this difficulty arose solely from the pre-assumption that the word was to be so continuously or monotonously spoken by a human being—I did not fail to perceive, in short, that the difficulty lay in the reconciliation of this monotony with the exercise of reason on the part of the creature repeating the word. Here, then, immediately arose the idea of a *non-reasoning* creature capable of speech; and, very naturally, a parrot, in the first instance, suggested itself, but was superseded forthwith by a Raven, as equally capable of speech, and infinitely more in keeping with the intended tone.

I had now gone so far as the conception of a Raven—the bird of ill omen—monotonously repeating the one word, "Nevermore," at the conclusion of each stanza, in a poem of melancholy tone, and in length about one hundred lines. Now, never losing sight of the object *supremeness*, or perfection, at all points, I asked myself—"Of all melancholy topics, what, according to the *universal* understanding of mankind, is the *most* melancholy?" Death—was the obvious reply. "And when," I said, "is this most melancholy of topics most poetical?" From what I have already explained at some length, the answer, here also, is obvious—"When it most closely allies itself to *Beauty*." the death, then, of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world—and equally is it beyond doubt that the

¹⁰ See C. Alphonso Smith, *Repetition and Parallelism in English Verse*.

¹¹ Poe was brought up in Virginia. Is the Southern *r* "the most producible consonant"?

lips best suited for such topic are those of a bereaved lover."¹²

I had now to combine the two ideas, of a lover lamenting his deceased mistress and a Raven continuously repeating the word "Nevermore."—I had to combine these, bearing in mind my design of varying at every turn the *application* of the word repeated; but the only intelligible mode of such combination is that of imagining the Raven employing the word in answer to the queries of the lover. And here it was that I saw at once the opportunity afforded for the effect on which I had been depending—that is to say, the effect of the *variation of application*. I saw that I could make the first query propounded by the lover—the first query to which the Raven should reply "Nevermore"—that I could make this first query a commonplace one—the second less so—the third still less, and so on—until at length the lover, startled from his original *nonchalance* by the melancholy character of the word itself—by its frequent repetition—and by a consideration of the ominous reputation of the fowl that uttered it—is at length excited to superstition, and wildly propounds queries of a far different character—queries whose solution he has passionately at heart—propounds them half in superstition and half in that species of despair which delights in self-torture—propounds them not altogether because he believes in the prophetic or demoniac character of the bird (which, reason assures him, is merely repeating a lesson learned by rote) but because he experiences a frenzied pleasure in so molding his questions as to receive from the *expected* "Nevermore" the most delicious because the most intolerable of sorrow. Perceiving the opportunity this afforded me—or, more strictly, thus forced upon me in the progress of the construction—I first established in mind the climax, or concluding query—that query to which "Nevermore" should be in the last place an answer—that in reply to which this word "Nevermore" should involve the uttermost conceivable amount of sorrow and despair.

¹² Do the great elegies bear out Poe's contention? Cf. Milton's "Lycidas," Shelley's "Adonais," Tennyson's "In Memoriam," Arnold's "Thyrsis," Emerson's "Threnody," and Whitman's "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd."

Here then the poem may be said to have its beginning—at the end, where all works of art should begin—for it was here, at this point of my preconsiderations, that I first put pen to paper in the composition of the stanza:

"Prophet," said I, "thing of evil! prophet still if
bird or devil!
By that heaven that bends above us—by that God
we both adore,
Tell this soul with sorrow laden, if within the
distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels
name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels
name Lenore."
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore"

I composed this stanza, at this point, first that, by establishing the climax, I might the better vary and graduate, as regards seriousness and importance, the preceding queries of the lover—and, secondly, that I might definitely settle the rhythm, the metre, and the length and general arrangement of the stanza—as well as graduate the stanzas which were to precede, so that none of them might surpass this in rhythmical effect. Had I been able, in the subsequent composition, to construct more vigorous stanzas, I should, without scruple, have purposely enfeebled them, so as not to interfere with the climacteric effect.¹³

And here I may as well say a few words of the versification. My first object (as usual) was originality. The extent to which this has been neglected, in versification, is one of the most unaccountable things in the world. Admitting that there is little possibility of variety in mere *rhythm*, it is still clear that the possible varieties of metre and stanza are absolutely infinite—and yet, *for centuries, no man, in verse, has ever done, or ever seemed to think of doing, an original thing*. The fact is, that originality (unless in minds of very unusual force) is by no means a matter, as some suppose, of impulse or intuition. In general, to be found, it must be elaborately sought, and although a positive merit of the highest class, demands in its attainment less of invention than negation.

¹³ Do you find this credible? If not, look up the lines which Thomas Gray finally omitted from his "Elegy" because to include them would spoil the symmetry of the poem.

Of course, I pretend to no originality in either the rhythm or metre of the "Raven." The former is trochaic—the latter is octameter acatalectic, alternating with heptameter catalectic repeated in the *refrain* of the fifth verse, and terminating with tetrameter catalectic. Less pedantically—the feet employed throughout (trochees) consist of a long syllable followed by a short: the first line of the stanza consists of eight of these feet—the second of seven and a half (in effect two-thirds)—the third of eight—the fourth of seven and a half—the fifth of the same—the sixth three and a half. Now, each of these lines, taken individually, has been employed before, and what originality the "Raven" has, is in their *combination into stanza*, nothing even remotely approaching this combination has ever been attempted. The effect of this originality of combination is aided by other unusual, and some altogether novel effects, arising from an extension of the application of the principles of rhyme and alliteration.

The next point to be considered was the mode of bringing together the lover and the Raven—and the first branch of this consideration was the *locale*. For this the most natural suggestion might seem to be a forest, or the fields—but it has always appeared to me that a close *circumscription of space* is absolutely necessary to the effect of insulated incident:—it has the force of a frame to a picture.¹⁴ It has an indisputable moral power in keeping concentrated the attention, and, of course, must not be confounded with mere unity of place.

I determined, then, to place the lover in his chamber—in a chamber rendered sacred to him by memories of her who had frequented it. The room is represented as richly furnished—this in mere pursuance of the ideas I have already explained on the subject of Beauty, as the sole true poetical thesis.

The *locale* being thus determined, I had now to introduce the bird—and the thought of introducing him through the window, was inevitable. The idea of making the lover suppose, in the first instance, that the flapping of the

wings of the bird against the shutter, is a "tapping" at the door, originated in the wish to increase, by prolonging, the reader's curiosity, and in a desire to admit the incidental effect arising from the lover's throwing open the door, finding all dark, and thence adopting the half-fancy that it was the spirit of his mistress that knocked.

I made the night tempestuous, first, to account for the Raven's seeking admission, and secondly, for the effect of contrast with the (physical) serenity within the chamber.

I made the bird alight on the bust of Pallas, also for the effect of contrast between the marble and the plumage—it being understood that the bust was absolutely *suggested* by the bird—the bust of *Pallas* being chosen, first, as most in keeping with the scholarship of the lover, and, secondly, for the sonorousness of the word, Pallas, itself.

About the middle of the poem, also, I have availed myself of the force of contrast, with a view of deepening the ultimate impression. For example, an air of the fantastic—approaching as nearly to the ludicrous as was admissible—is given to the Raven's entrance. He comes in "with many a flirt and flutter."

*Not the least obeisance made he—not a moment stopped or stayed he,
But with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door.*

In the two stanzas which follow, the design is more obviously carried out:—

*Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,
"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou,"
I said, "art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore?"
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."*

*Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door—*

¹⁴ "There are few principles of greater importance than the one Poe here so casually announces" (Margaret Alterton and Hardin Craig, *Edgar Allan Poe*, 1935, p. 538).

*Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his
chamber door,*

With such name as "Nevermore."

The effect of the *dénouement* being thus provided for, I immediately drop the fantastic for a tone of the most profound seriousness:—this tone commencing in the stanza directly following the one last quoted, with the line,

*But the Raven, sitting lonely on that placid bust,
spoke only, etc*

From this epoch the lover no longer jests—no longer sees anything even of the fantastic in the Raven's demeanor. He speaks of him as a "grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore," and feels the "fiery eyes" burning into his "bosom's core." This revolution of thought, or fancy, on the lover's part, is intended to induce a similar one on the part of the reader—to bring the mind into a proper frame for the *dénouement*—which is now brought about as rapidly and as directly as possible.

With the *dénouement* proper—with the Raven's reply, "Nevermore," to the lover's final demand if he shall meet his mistress in another world—the poem, in its obvious phase, that of a simple narrative, may be said to have its completion. So far, everything is within the limits of the accountable—of the real. A raven, having learned by rote the single word "Nevermore," and having escaped from the custody of its owner, is driven at midnight, through the violence of a storm, to seek admission at a window from which a light still gleams—the chamber-window of a student, occupied half in poring over a volume, half in dreaming of a beloved mistress deceased. The casement being thrown open at the fluttering of the bird's wings, the bird itself perches on the most convenient seat out of the immediate reach of the student, who, amused by the incident and the oddity of the visitor's demeanor, demands of it, in jest and without looking for a reply, its name. The raven addressed, answers with its customary word, "Nevermore"—a word which finds immediate echo in the melancholy heart of the student, who, giving utterance aloud to certain thoughts suggested by the occasion, is again startled by the fowl's repetition of "Nevermore." The student now guesses the state of the case, but

is impelled, as I have before explained, by the human thirst for self-torture, and in part by superstition, to propound such queries to the bird as will bring him, the lover, the most of the luxury of sorrow, through the anticipated answer "Nevermore." With the indulgence, to the extreme, of this self-torture, the narration, in what I have termed its first or obvious phase, has a natural termination, and so far there has been no overstepping of the limits of the real.

But in subjects so handled, however skillfully, or with however vivid an array of incident, there is always a certain hardness or nakedness, which repels the artistical eye. Two things are invariably required—first, some amount of complexity, or more properly, adaptation; and, secondly, some amount of suggestiveness—some under-current, however indefinite, of meaning. It is this latter, in especial, which imparts to a work of art so much of that *richness* (to borrow from colloquy a forcible term) which we are too fond of confounding with the *ideal*. It is the *excess* of the suggested meaning—it is the rendering this the upper instead of the under-current of the theme—which turns into prose (and that of the very flattest kind) the so-called poetry of the so-called transcendentalists.

Holding these opinions, I added the two concluding stanzas of the poem—their suggestiveness being thus made to pervade all the narrative which has preceded them. The under-current of meaning is rendered first apparent in the lines—

*"Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy
form from off my door!"*

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore!"

It will be observed that the words, "from out my heart," involve the first metaphorical expression in the poem. They, with the answer, "Nevermore," dispose the mind to seek a moral in all that has been previously narrated. The reader begins now to regard the Raven as emblematic¹⁵—but it is not until the very last line of the very last stanza, that the intention of making him emblematic of *Mournful and Never-ending Remembrance*¹⁶ is permitted distinctly to be seen:

¹⁵ Symbolic.

¹⁶ Is this a good statement of the "effect" aimed at in "The Raven"?

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still
is sitting,
On the pallid bust of Pallas, just above my
chamber door,
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that
is dreaming,
And the lamplight o'er him streaming throws his
shadow on the floor,
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating
on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore.¹⁷

NESACE'S SONG

from AL AARAAF

(1829)

This passage is the second of the songs of Nesace (accented on the first syllable) in Poe's long and formless "Al Aaraaf." That poem constituted a large part of Poe's second volume of verse, published in 1829, when he was only twenty years old. Nothing in his 1827 volume had great merit, but the song given below is one of the finest lyrics he ever wrote.

Al Aaraaf (variously spelled) is the name given by Mohammedans to the abode of departed spirits which is intermediate between Heaven and Hell. Poe's interest in Mohammedan mythology had probably been aroused by the poems of Byron and Moore dealing with the Near East. "The central idea of the poem," says Killis Campbell, "seems to be the divineness of beauty—a happy anticipation of Lamar's doctrine of the 'holiness of beauty.'" The song is Nesace's call to her attendant spirits, of whom Ligeia is one. (Note the recurrence of the name in his famous short story.) In his edition of Poe's poems, J. H. Whitty calls attention to a passage in Lowell's article on Poe in *Graham's Magazine* for February, 1845—a passage which Poe may have seen and was probably largely responsible for: "In a poem named 'Ligeia'...he [Poe] intended to personify the music of nature,..."

In 1845 Poe read "Al Aaraaf" before the Boston Lyceum in lieu of a poem he had planned to write for this special occasion. The Boston papers gave rather unfavorable notices of the affair, but one listener, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, one of the most interesting minor New England writers, was greatly impressed by Poe's reading of Nesace's song.

¹⁷ Note that if Poe's argument is sound and if there has been no flaw in his execution, "The Raven" is the greatest poem in the language. Do you suppose Poe was conscious of this corollary to his main proposition?

See his *Short Studies of American Authors*. The following briefer account is taken from Higginson and Boynton's *Reader's History of American Literature*.

"The verses had long been printed in his youthful volume . . . and they produced no very distinct impression until Poe began to read the maiden's song in the second part. Already his tones had been softening to a finer melody than at first, and when he came to the verses,—

10 *'Ligeia' Ligeia'*
 My beautiful one!

his voice seemed attenuated to the faintest golden thread; the audience became hushed, and, as it were, breathless, there seemed no life in the hall but his, and every syllable was accentuated with such delicacy, and sustained with such sweetness, as I never heard equaled by other lips. When the lyric ended, it was like the ceasing of the gypsy's chant in Browning's 'Flight of the Duchess', and I remember nothing more, except that in walking back to Cambridge my comrades and I felt that we had been under the spell of some wizard. Indeed, I feel much the same in the retrospect, to this day."

25 "Neath blue-bell or streamer—
 Or tufted wild spray
 That keeps from the dreamer
 The moonbeam away—
 Bright beings, that ponder
30 With half closing eyes,
 On the stars which your wonder
 Hath drawn from the skies,
 Till they glance thro' the shade, and
 Come down to your brow
35 Like—eyes of the maiden
 Who calls on you now—
 Arise! from your dreaming
 In violet bowers,
 To duty beseeching
40 These star-litten hours—
 And shake from your tresses
 Encumber'd with dew
 The breath of those kisses
 That cumber them too
45 (O, how, without you, Love!
 Could angels be blest?)—
 Those kisses of true love
 That lull'd ye to rest!
 Up!—shake from your wing
50 Each hindering thing:
 The dew of the night—
 . It would weigh down your flight;

And true love caresses—
O! leave them apart:
They are light on the tresses,
But lead on the heart.

“Ligeia! Ligeia!
My beautiful one!
Whose harshest idea
Will to melody run,
O! is it thy will
On the breezes to toss?
Or, capriciously still,
Like the lone Albatross,¹
Incumbent on night
(As she on the air)
To keep watch with delight
On the harmony there?

“Ligeia! wherever
Thy image may be,
No magic shall sever
Thy music from thee.
Thou hast bound many eyes
In a dreamy sleep—
But the strains still arise
Which *thy* vigilance keep:
The sound of the rain
Which leaps down to the flower,
And dances again
In the rhythm of the shower—
The murmur that springs
From the growing grass²
Are the music of things—
But are modell’d, alas!—
Away, then, my dearest,
O! hie thee away
To springs that lie clearest
Beneath the moon-ray—
To lone lake that smiles,
In its dream of deep rest,
At the many star-isles
That enjewel its breast—
Where wild flowers, creeping,
Have mingled their shade,
On its margin is sleeping

Full many a maid—
Some have left the cool glade, and
Have slept with the bee³—
Arouse them, my maiden,
On moorland and lea—

Go! breathe on their slumber,⁴
All softly in ear,
The musical number
They slumber’d to hear—
For what can awaken
An angel so soon,
Whose sleep hath been taken
Beneath the cold moon,
As the spell which no slumber
Of witchery may test,
The rhythmical number
Which lull’d him to rest?”

TO HELEN

(1831)

This poem, so Poe said, was addressed to the mother of a Richmond schoolmate, Mrs Jane Stith Standard, who had been kind to him. Her death in 1821 made an abiding impression on the fifteen-year-old boy. Poe’s story that the poem was composed when he was only fourteen is not credible. The lady was still living at that time. Besides, if the poem had been written then, he would doubtless have included it in his earlier volume of poems.

The poem has been highly—and deservedly—praised. Lowell, who contributed to *Graham’s Magazine* an article on Poe, quotes the poem and comments: “There is a little dimness in the filling up, but the grace and symmetry of the outline are such as few poets ever attain. There is a smack of ambrosia about it. . . . All is limpid and serene, with a pleasant dash of the Greek Helicon in it. The melody of the whole, too, is remarkable. . . . It seems simple, like a Greek column, because of its perfection.”

Readers often overlook the fact that Poe’s doctrine of the single effect is applicable to his poems as well as his stories. In “To Helen” the now hackneyed phrase, “thy classic face,” suggests the effect at which he aimed.

Lines 9-10 read originally:

*“To the beauty of fair Greece
And the grandeur of old Rome.”*

³ The wild bee will not sleep in the shade if there be moonlight. . . . (Poe’s note.)

⁴ Compare the preceding paragraph with the next to the last paragraph of Poe’s lecture “The Poetic Principle,” in which he enumerates “a few of the simple elements which induce in the Poet the true poetical effect.”

¹ The albatross is said to sleep on the wing (Poe’s note.)

² I met with this idea in an old English tale, which I am now unable to obtain and quote from memory:—“The verie essence and, as it were, springe-head, and origine of all musiche is the very pleasante sounde which the trees of the forest do make when they grow.” (Poe’s note.)

Scholars have made various conjectures as to the meaning of "Nicéan" in the second line, which is perhaps reminiscent of Coleridge's line in "Youth and Age":

"Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore"

"Nicéan" has been thought to refer to Nice in southern France or to Nicæa in Asia Minor. As plausible as any is William Michael Rossetti's contention that Poe derived the word from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book IV, lines 275 ff.

" . . . that Nyseian isle
Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham
Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Libyan Jove,
Hid Amalthea and her florid son
Young Bacchus from her stepdame Rhea's eye; . . ."

"The weary, way-worn wanderer" is perhaps Bacchus or Ulysses

Helen, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicéan barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, way-worn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy-Land!

ISRAFEL

(1831)

In 1831, when he first printed the poem, Poe added the following note, ascribing it to the Koran: "And the angel Israfel who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures." In 1845 the note read: "And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.—KORAN." The quotation comes from George Sale's "Preliminary Discourse" to his translation of the *Koran*: "The angel Israfil, who has the most melodious voice of all God's creatures." Poe has not only quoted carelessly; he has ascribed to the *Koran* a line from his poem. In their *Introduction to American Poetry* Professors Prescott and Sanders comment: "If his [Poe's] procedure now seems disingenuous, it should be remembered that he was a hard-working

journalist, less concerned with scholarly scruples than with impressing the unscholarly readers of his magazine." The line, "Whose heart-strings are a lute," seems an echo of the following lines by Béranger which he used as a motto for "The Fall of the House of Usher":

"Son cœur est un luth suspendu,
Sitôt qu'on le touche, il résonne."

"Israfel" should be compared with other Romantic poems of aspiration such as Keats "Ode to a Nightingale" and Shelley's "To a Skylark," of which the concluding stanza reads:

"Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then—as
I am listening now."

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell
"Whose heart-strings are a lute";
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,
And the giddy stars (so legends tell),
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
In her highest noon,
The enamoured moon
Blushes with love,
While, to listen, the red levin
(With the rapid Pleiads, even,
Which were seven.)
Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir
And the other listening things)
That Israfel's fire
Is owing to that lyre
By which he sits and sings—
The trembling living wire
Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,
Where deep thoughts are a duty,
Where Love's a grown-up God,
Where the Houri glances are
Imbued with all the beauty
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore, thou art not wrong,
Israfel, who despisest

An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
Best bard, because the wisest!
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above
With thy burning measures suit—
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
With the fervour of thy lute—
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine, but this
Is a world of sweets and sour;
Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfil
Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might
swell
From my lyre within the sky.

THE CITY IN THE SEA

(1831)

This poem seems to have had its beginning in the opening lines of the second part of "Al Aaraaf," in which at one time appeared the following passage:

*"Far down within the crystal of the lake
Thy swollen pillars tremble—and so quake
The hearts of many wanderers who look in
Thy luridness of beauty—and of sin."*

The poem underwent several changes of title: "The Doomed City," "The City of Sin," "The City in the Sea." This poem is one of the most original that Poe wrote, and yet it owes much to other poets, to the Bible, and to stories of sunken cities. (See the notes in Killis Campbell's edition of the poems, and Louise Pound, "On Poe's 'The City in the Sea,'" *American Literature*, VI, 22-27, March, 1934.) Professor Campbell comments: "That Poe's conception in *The City in the Sea* is that of the wicked dead is indicated by the atmosphere of gloom which pervades the 'doomed city,' and is plainly implied in the closing lines of the poem and in the title adopted in 1836—*The City of Sin*. . . the situation with which the poet has to do here is that of the 'City of Death' (which he identifies symbolically, as did Isaiah and the apostle John, with the city of Babylon), and in particular with this city shortly before the last judgment."

Lo! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad and the worst
and the best

Have gone to their eternal rest.
There shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not!)
Resemble nothing that is ours.

10 Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the holy heaven come down
15 On the long night-time of that town;
But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently—

Gleams up the pinnacles far and free:
Up domes—up spires—up kingly walls—
20 Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers—

Up many and many a marvellous shrine
Whose wreathed friezes intertwine
25 The viol, the violet, and the vine.

Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
30 That all seem pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves
35 Yawn level with the luminous waves;
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol's diamond eye—

Not the gayly-jewelled dead,
Tempt the waters from their bed;
40 For no ripples curl, alas!
Along that wilderness of glass—

No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea—
No heavings hint that winds have been
45 On seas less hideously serene.

But lo, a stir is in the air!
The wave—there is a movement there!
As if the towers had thrust aside,
50 In slightly sinking, the dull tide—
As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven.

The waves have now a redder glow—
 The hours are breathing faint and low—
 And when, amid no earthly moans,
 Down, down that town shall settle hence,
 Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
 Shall do it reverence.

THE SLEEPER

(1831)

Poe wrote of this poem: "In the higher qualities of poetry it is better than 'The Raven,' but there is not one man in a million who could be brought to agree with me in this opinion. 'The Raven,' of course, is far the better as a work of art; but in the true basis of all art, 'The Sleeper' is the superior." "The Sleeper" is one of a number of Poe's poems that deal with what seemed to him the best subject for a poem. Cf. "The Philosophy of Composition": ". . . the death, then, of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world—and equally is it beyond doubt that the lips best suited for such topic are those of a bereaved lover." Many of his poems have been thought to refer to his wife Virginia. One should remember, however, that the poems on this subject were written while Virginia was still a child ("Tamerlane," for example), while the two were happily married, while she was an invalid, and after her death. One can hardly be certain that even "Annabel Lee" refers to her or to any definite woman. In early life Poe must have been greatly affected by the successive deaths of his mother, Mrs. Stanard, and the first Mrs. Allan.

At midnight, in the month of June,
 I stand beneath the mystic moon.
 An opiate vapor, dewy, dim,
 Exhales from out her golden rim,
 And softly dripping, drop by drop,
 Upon the quiet mountain top,
 Steals drowsily and musically
 Into the universal valley.
 The rosemary nods upon the grave;
 The lily lolls upon the wave;
 Wrapping the fog about its breast,
 The ruin moulders into rest;
 Looking like Lethe, see! the lake
 A conscious slumber seems to take,
 And would not, for the world, awake.
 All Beauty sleeps!—and lo! where lies
 Irené, with her Destinies!

O lady bright! can it be right—
 This window open to the night?
 The wanton airs, from the tree-top,
 Laughingly through the lattice drop—
 The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,

Flit through thy chamber in and out,
 And wave the curtain canopy
 So fitfully—so fearfully—
 Above the closed and fringed lid
 'Neath which thy slumb'ring soul lies hid,
 That, o'er the floor and down the wall,
 Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall!

Oh, lady dear, hast thou no fear?
 Why and what art thou dreaming here?
 Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas,
 A wonder to these garden trees!
 Strange is thy pallor! strange thy dress!
 Strange, above all, thy length of tress,
 And this all solemn silentness!

The lady sleeps! Oh! may her sleep,
 Which is enduring, so be deep!
 Heaven have her in its sacred keep!
 This chamber changed for one more holy,
 This bed for one more melancholy,
 I pray to God that she may lie
 Forever with unopened eye,
 While the pale sheeted ghosts go by!

My love, she sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,
 As it is lasting, so be deep!
 Soft may the worms about her creep!
 Far in the forest, dim and old,
 For her may some tall vault unfold—
 Some vault that oft hath flung its black
 And wingéd panels fluttering back,
 Triumphant, o'er the crested palls
 Of her grand family funerals—
 Some sepulchre, remote, alone,
 Against whose portal she hath thrown,
 In childhood many and idle stone—
 Some tomb from out whose sounding door
 She ne'er shall force an echo more,
 Thrilling to think, poor child of sin!
 It was the dead who groaned within.

THE COLISEUM

(1833)

Byron, the poet who most influenced Poe, has two memorable descriptions of the Coliseum. The better known of the two appears in Canto IV of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. The other, which in both idea and form more closely resembles Poe's poem, occurs in *Manfred*, Act III, Scene iv:

"I do remember me that in my youth,
 When I was wandering,—upon such a night

*I stood within the Coliseum's wall,
Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome.
The trees which grew along the broken arches
Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars
Shone through the rents of ruin, from afar
The watch-dog bayed beyond the Tiber, and
More near from out the Caesar's palace came
The owl's long cry: and, interruptedly,
Of distant sentinels the fitful song
Begun and died upon the gentle wind,
Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach
Appeared to skirt the horizon, yet they stood
Within a bowshot Where the Caesars dwelt,
And dwell the tuneless birds of night, amidst
A grove which springs through levelled battlements
And twines its roots with the imperial hearths,
Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth,
But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,
A noble wreck in ruinous perfection,—
While Caesar's chambers, and the Augustan halls,
Grovel on earth in indistinct decay.
And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon
All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
Which softened down the hoar austerity
Of rugged desolation, and filled up,
As 'twere anew, the gaps of centuries;
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which was not, till the place
Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
With silent worship of the great of old,—
The dead but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule
Our spirits from their urns."*

Type of the antique Rome! Rich reliquary
Of lofty contemplation left to Time
By buried centuries of pomp and power!
At length—at length—after so many days
Of weary pilgrimage and burning thirst
(Thirst for the springs of lore that in thee lie),
I kneel, an altered and an humble man,
Amid thy shadows, and so drink within
My very soul thy grandeur, gloom, and glory!

Vastness! and Age! and Memories of Eld!
Silence! and Desolation! and dim Night!
I feel ye now—I feel ye in your strength—
O spells more sure than e'er Judæan king
Taught in the gardens of Gethsemane!
O charms more potent than the rapt Chaldee
Ever drew down from out the quiet stars!

Here, where a hero fell, a column falls!
Here, where the mimic eagle glared in gold,
A midnight vigil holds the swarthy bat!
Here, where the dames of Rome their gilded
hair

Waved to the wind, now wave the reed and
thistle!

Here, where on golden throne the monarch
loll'd,

5 Glides, spectre-like, unto his marble home,
Lit by the wan light of the hornéd moon,
The swift and silent lizard of the stones!

But stay! these walls—these ivy-clad arcades—
10 These mouldering plinths—these sad and black-
ened shafts—

These vague entablatures — this crumbling
frieze—

These shattered cornices—this wreck—this
ruin—

15 These stones — alas! these gray stones — are
they all—

All of the tamed and the colossal left
By the corrosive Hours to Fate and me?

20 "Not all"—the Echoes answer me—"not all!
Prophetic sounds and loud, arise forever
From us, and from all Ruin, unto the wise,
As melody from Memnon to the Sun.

25 We rule the hearts of mightiest men—we rule
With a despotic sway all giant minds.

We are not impotent—we pallid stones.

Not all our power is gone—not all our fame—

Not all the magic of our high renown—

30 Not all the wonder that encircles us—

Not all the mysteries that in us lie—

Not all the memories that hang upon

And cling around about us as a garment,

Clothing us in a robe of more than glory."

35

TO ONE IN PARADISE

(1834)

This poem forms a part of Poe's story, "The As-
40 signation," which first appeared in *Godey's Lady's
Book* for January, 1834. The poem gains in effective-
ness when read as part of the story which is its
appropriate setting. Note the poems included in
"Ligeia" and "The Fall of the House of Usher."

45 Thou wast that all to me, love,
For which my soul did pine—

A green isle in the sea, love,

A fountain and a shrine,

All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,

And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!

Ah, starry Hope! that didst arise

But to be overcast!
A voice from out the Future cries,
"On! on!"—but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast!

For, alas! alas! with me
The light of Life is o'er!
No more—no more—no more
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar!

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy grey eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances
By what eternal streams.

HYMN

(1835)

This poem, which at one time bore the title
"Catholic Hymn," appeared originally as a part of
the story "Morella," in the *Southern Literary Mes-*
senger in April, 1835.

At morn—at noon—at twilight dim—
Maria! thou hast heard my hymn!
In joy and wo—in good and ill—
Mother of God, be with me still!
When the Hours flew brightly by,
And not a cloud obscured the sky,
My soul, lest it should truant be,
Thy grace did guide to thine and thee;
Now, when storms of Fate o'erblast
Darkly my Present and my Past,
Let my Future radiant shine
With sweet hopes of thee and thine!

DREAM-LAND

(1844)

By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon,¹ named NIGHT,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have reached these lands but newly
From an ultimate dim Thule—
From a wild weird clime that lieth, sublime,
Out of SPACE—out of TIME.

¹ Image; phantom.

Bottomless vales and boundless floods,
And chasms, and caves, and Titan woods,
With forms that no man can discover
For the tears that drip all over;
5 Mountains toppling evermore
Into seas without a shore;
Seas that restlessly aspire,
Surging, unto skies of fire;
Lakes that endlessly outspread
10 Their lone waters, lone and dead,—
Their still waters, still and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily.

By the lakes that thus outspread
15 Their lone waters, lone and dead,—
Their sad waters, sad and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily,—
By the mountains—near the river
Murmuring lowly, murmuring ever,—
20 By the grey woods,—by the swamp
Where the toad and the newt encamp,—
By the dismal tarns and pools
Where dwell the Ghouls,—
By each spot the most unholy—
25 In each nook most melancholy,—
There the traveller meets, aghast,
Sheeted Memories of the Past—
Shrouded forms that start and sigh
As they pass the wanderer by—
30 White-robed forms of friends long given,
In agony, to the Earth—and Heaven.

For the heart whose woes are legion
'Tis a peaceful, soothing region—
35 For the spirit that walks in shadow
'Tis—oh 'tis an Eldorado!
But the traveller, travelling through it,
May not—dare not openly view it;
Never its mysteries are exposed
40 To the weak human eye unclosed;
So wills its King, who hath forbid
The uplifting of the fringed lid;
And thus the sad Soul that here passes
Beholds it but through darkened glasses.

By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,
On a black throne reigns upright,
50 I have wandered home but newly
From this ultimate dim Thule.

THE RAVEN

(1845)

"The Raven" should be studied in the light of Poe's comments in "The Philosophy of Composition." Poe, however, does not tell us the whole story of the genesis of that poem. The raven was probably suggested to Poe by the pet raven, "Grip," in Dickens's *Barnaby Rudge*. In reviewing the novel, Poe had noted a lost opportunity on Dickens's part: "Its croakings might have been *prophetically* heard in the course of the drama. Its character might have performed, in regard to that of the idiot, much the same part as does, in music, the accompaniment in respect to the air." The poem owes something, too, to a poem of Mrs. Browning, to whom Poe was soon to dedicate *The Raven and Other Poems* (1845). Her "Lady Geraldine's Courtship" may have suggested the metrical form. Note the following stanza:

*"Eyes," he said, "now throbbing through me! are ye eyes that did undo me?
Shining eyes, like antique jewels set in Parian statue-stone!
Underneath that calm white forehead are ye ever burning torrid
O'er the desolate sand-desert of my heart and life undone?"*

Cf. also her line,

"With a murmurous stir uncertain, in the air the purple curtain,"

with Poe's,

"And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain."

For Poe's possible indebtedness to other poets, see the notes in Killis Campbell's edition of the poems. Note the similarity between certain poems of Poe and those of Thomas Holley Chivers.

"The Raven" was Poe's first poem that had anything like a popular vogue, and it is still his best-known poem. Critics, however, have usually preferred one of the less-known poems, and have objected to a certain artificiality, a smell of the midnight oil about the poem. In his *Recollections*, the British novelist, Hall Caine, quotes Dante Gabriel Rossetti as saying that "The Raven" inspired the latter's "The Blessed Damsel." Rossetti said: "I saw that Poe had done the utmost it was possible to do with the grief of the lover on earth, and I determined to reverse the condition, and give utterance to the yearning of the loved one in heaven."

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
" 'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door—
Only this and nothing more." 5

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December;
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow 10
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore:
Nameless *here* for evermore.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain 15
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;

So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating,
 " 'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door—
 Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;—
 This it is and nothing more."

5

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
 "Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
 But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
 And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
 10 That I scarce was sure I heard you"—here I opened wide the door;—
 Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
 Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;
 15 But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
 And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore?"
 This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore!"
 Merely this and nothing more.

20 Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
 Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
 "Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice;
 Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore—
 Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;—
 25 'Tis the wind and nothing more!"

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
 In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore;
 Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;
 30 But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door—
 Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door—
 Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,
 35 By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,
 "Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure no craven,
 Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—
 Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!"
 Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

40

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
 Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
 For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
 Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door—
 45 Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
 With such name as "Nevermore."

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only
 That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.
 50 Nothing further then he uttered—not a feather then he fluttered—
 Till I scarcely more than muttered,—“Other friends have flown before—
 On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before.”
 Then the bird said, "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
 "Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store
 Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
 Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—
 Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
 Of 'Never—nevermore.' "

5

But the Raven still beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,
 Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door;
 Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
 Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—
 What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
 Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

10

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
 To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;
 This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
 On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o'er,
 But whose velvet-violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er,
 She shall press, ah, nevermore!

15

20

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
 Swung by seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.¹
 "Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee
 Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore;
 Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget this lost Lenore!"
 Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

25

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!—
 Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
 Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—
 On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore—
 Is there—is there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!"
 Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

30

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!
 By that Heaven that bends above us, by that God we both adore—
 Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
 It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
 Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore."
 Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

35

40

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shrieked, upstarting—
 "Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian shore!
 Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
 Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!
 Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"
 Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

45

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, *still* is sitting
 On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;

50

¹ W. C. Brownell remarks in *American Prose Masters*: "Tinkling feet on a tufted carpet is nonsense, but it is not a false note in the verbal harmony of the artificial 'Raven.'"

And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
 And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;²
 And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
 Shall be lifted—nevermore!

ULALUME—A BALLAD

(1847)

Commentators and critics have disagreed concerning the meaning and the intrinsic merits of "Ulalume." Theodore Watts-Dunton, in his well-known article on Poetry in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (eleventh edition) suggests

"The poet's object in that remarkable *tour de force* was to express dull and hopeless gloom in the same way that the mere musician would have expressed it—that it to say, by monotonous reiterations, by hollow and dreadful reverberations of gloomy sounds—though as an artist whose vehicle was articulate speech he was obliged to add gloomy ideas, in order to give to his work the intellectual coherence necessary for its existence as a poem"

In an essay on "Poe's 'Ulalume'" (in his *Sidelights on American Literature*) Fred Lewis Pattee sums up his interpretation:

"'Ulalume' is the epitome of Poe's last years. It is the picture of a soul hovering between hope and inevitable despair, a soul longing passionately for a sympathy which it can never have, a soul struggling toward the light yet beaten back at every point, a soul that realized as few other souls ever have the supernal beauty which is possible in human life, yet condemned like Tantalus never to share its joys."

Edwin Markham thinks that the poem "chronicles in symbol the collision between an ignoble passion and the memory of an ideal love." Professor Pattee sees in the poem not only the death of Virginia Poe but also the poet's love for Mrs. Shew, who was not willing to marry him.

"The poem," Professor Campbell points out, "belongs to the well-known and ancient narrative *genre* of the dialogue (or debate) between the body and the soul." Cf. Walt Whitman's "Darest thou now,

O Soul" and Poe's short story, "William Wilson" "The Psyche," says J. M. Robertson in an excellent critical essay on Poe (in *New Essays toward a Critical Method*), "is the obscure whisper of the tired heart, the suspended memory, that will not be wholly appeased with the beauty of the night and the stars, and the poet has but cast into a mystical dialogue the interplay of the waking and the half-sleeping sense, which goes on till the cypress, some symbol of the grave, flashes its deadly message on the shrinking soul, and grief leaps into full supremacy"

Note the onomatopoeic value of the "myth-names" *Auber, Weir, Yaanek*.

The skies they were ashen and sober;

The leaves they were crispèd and sere—

The leaves they were withering and sere:

It was night in the lonesome October

Of my most immemorial year

It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,

In the misty mid region of Weir—

It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,

In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic,

Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—

Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.

These were days when my heart was volcanic

As the scoriac rivers that roll—

As the lavas that restlessly roll

Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek

In the ultimate climes of the pole—

That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek

In the realms of the Boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,

But our thoughts they were palsied and sere—

Our memories were treacherous and sere,

² To those who wondered how the lamp could throw the raven's shadow on the floor, Poe replied that for poetic purposes "it is quite sufficient that a thing is possible, or at least that its improbability be not offensively glaring." He went on to explain that he had thought of the light as coming from a "bracket candelabrum affixed against the wall, high up above the door and bust, as is often seen in the English palaces, and even in some of the better houses of New York." Instead of making this rather lame defense, would not Poe have done better to follow Goethe's method in defending Rubens for making the shadows in one of his pictures fall in two directions? "The double light," said Goethe to Eckermann, "is certainly audacious, and you can always say that it's contrary to nature. But if it is contrary to nature, then I say along with that, that it is higher than nature; I say it is the daring touch of a master, through which he makes clear, that art is not wholly subject to physical necessity, but has its own laws." See the discussion of this point in John Livingston Lowes, *Convention and Revolt in Poetry*, pp. 36-39.

For we knew not the month was October,
 And we marked not the night of the year
 (Ah, night of all nights in the year!)—
 We noted not the dim lake of Auber
 (Though once we had journeyed down 5
 here)—

We remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,
 Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent
 And star-dials pointed to morn—
 As the star-dials hinted of morn—
 At the end of our path a liquescent
 And nebulous lustre was born,
 Out of which a miraculous crescent
 Arose with a duplicate horn—
 Astarte's¹ bediamonded crescent
 Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said: "She is warmer than Dian;
 She rolls through an ether of sighs—
 She revels in a region of sighs.
 She has seen that the tears are not dry on
 These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
 And has come past the stars of the Lion,
 To point us the path to the skies—
 To the Lethæan peace of the skies—
 Come up, in despite of the Lion,
 To shine on us with her bright eyes—
 Come up through the lair of the Lion,
 With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
 Said: "Sadly this star I mistrust—
 Her pallor I strangely mistrust:
 Ah, hasten!—ah, let us not linger!
 Ah, fly!—let us fly!—for we must."
 In terror she spoke, letting sink her
 Wings till they trailed in the dust—
 In agony sobbed, letting sink her
 Plumes till they trailed in the dust—
 Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied: "This is nothing but dreaming:
 Let us on by this tremulous light!
 Let us bathe in this crystalline light!
 Its Sibillic splendor is beaming
 With Hope and in Beauty to-night:—
 See!—it flickers up the sky through the night!

¹ Astarte was a Phœnician goddess of the moon. She was also, unlike the Roman Diana, the goddess of love. In Poe's "Eulalie"—and perhaps here also—Astarte is the planet Venus.

Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,
 And be sure it will lead us aright—
 We surely may trust to a gleaming
 That cannot but guide us aright,
 Since it flickers up to Heaven through the
 night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
 And tempted her out of her gloom—
 And conquered her scruples and gloom;
 And we passed to the end of the vista,
 But were stopped by the door of a tomb—
 By the door of a legended tomb;
 And I said: "What is written, sweet sister,
 15 On the door of this legended tomb?"
 She replied, "Ulalume—Ulalume!—
 'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
 20 As the leaves that were crispéd and sere—
 As the leaves that were withering and sere;
 And I cried: "It was surely October
 On *this* very night of last year
 That I journeyed—I journeyed down here!—
 25 That I brought a dread burden down here—
 On this night of all nights in the year,
 Ah, what demon hath tempted me here?
 Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber—
 This misty mid region of Weir—
 30 Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,
 This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir."

Said we, then—the two, then: "Ah, can it
 Have been that the woodlandish ghouls—
 35 The pitiful, the merciful ghouls—
 To bar up our way and to ban it
 From the secret that lies in these wolds—
 From the thing that lies hidden in these
 wolds—
 40 Have drawn up the spectre of a planet
 From the limbo of lunary souls—
 This sinfully scintillant planet
 From the Hell of the planetary souls?"²

THE BELLS (1849)

"The Bells"—partly because its subject matter is comparatively slight—has often been regarded as a *tour de force* rather than a genuine poem. An analysis of the poem, however, throws light upon

² The last stanza does not appear in all versions of "Ulalume."

Poe's technical virtuosity. There are two early versions of the poem (both given in J. H. Whitty's edition of the poems), one of which runs as follows:

THE BELLS—A SONG

*The bells!—hear the bells!
The merry wedding bells!
The little silver bells!
How fairy-like a melody there swells
From the silver tinkling bells
Of the bells, bells, bells!
Of the Bells!*

*The bells!—ah, the bells!
The heavy iron bells!
Hear the tolling of the bells!
Hear the knells!
How horrible a monody there floats
From their throats—
From their deep-toned throats!
How I shudder at the notes
From the melancholy throats
Of the bells, bells, bells!
Of the Bells!*

In form "The Bells" belongs to a not uncommon English type, the irregular rimed poem. Examples are Dryden's "Alexander's Feast," Coleridge's "Kubla Khan," Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality," Robinson's "The Man against the Sky," Vachel Lindsay's "The Congo," and Poe's "Israfel." In a notable article on Poetry found in older editions of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Theodore Watts-Dunton explains the principle underlying the apparent lawlessness of such poems:

"In modern prosody the arrangement of the rhymes and the length of the lines in any rhymed metrical passage may be determined either by a fixed stanzaic law, or by a law infinitely deeper—by the law which impels the soul, in a state of poetic exaltation, to seize hold of every kind of metrical aid, such as rhyme, cæsura, etc., for the purpose of accentuating and marking off each shade of emotion as it arises, regardless of any demands of stanza. . . . In the regular metres we enjoy the pleasure of feeling that the rhymes will inevitably fall under a recognized law of couplet or stanza. But if the passage flows independently of these, it must still flow inevitably—it must, in short, show that it is governed by another and a yet deeper force, the inevitableness of emotional expression."

(Note that Watts-Dunton's argument applies as well to free verse as to poems in rime.)

"The Bells," like Victor Hugo's "Les Djinns" and Southey's "How the Water Comes down at Lodore," is an extended exercise in onomatopœia. Pope's line,

The sound must seem an echo to the sense,

will serve to suggest the meaning of this technical term. Two excellent examples are to be found in Milton's descriptions of the opening of the gates of Hell and of Heaven:

*"On a sudden open fly,
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,
The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus"*

*"Heaven opened wide
Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound
On golden hinges moving, to let forth
The King of Glory, in his powerful Word
And Spirit coming to create new worlds"*

It would be somewhat easier to study the sound pattern of "The Bells" if one could print in parallel columns the four divisions—they are not stanzas—of the poem. Note how skillfully Poe has chosen his words for sound and suggestive quality in the closing lines of each division:

From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells

To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells

In the clamor and the clanging of the bells

To the moaning and the groaning of the bells

Similarly, one may compare the three opening lines of each division. Poe's favorite consonant and vowel sounds are seen in the names he uses: *Lenore, Helen, Eleanora, Ligeia, Annabel Lee*, etc. He is, like most other poets, fond of the liquids, *l, m, n, r*, and of long *e* and *o*. In the first division of the poem, note the predominance of the short *e* and short *i* not only in the rime words but in the middle of the line (where it is called assonance). Other vowel sounds are introduced to prevent monotony. The longer vowel sounds predominate in the second division; and in the fourth, long *o*'s and long *u*'s. In the third division the rather harsh and hissing sounds—*r, s, sh*, etc.—are perhaps intended to suggest the hissing sound of the fire and the clanging of fire-bells. (See W. L. Werner, "Poe's Theories and Practice in Poetic Technique," *American Literature*, II, 157-165.)

I

Hear the sledges with the bells—
Silver bells!

What a world of merriment their melody
foretells!

5

How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,

In the icy air of night!

While the stars that oversprinkle

All the heavens, seem to twinkle

With a crystalline delight;

Keeping time, time, time,
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,
 To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
 From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells— 5
 From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

II

Hear the mellow wedding bells—
 Golden bells! 10
 What a world of happiness their harmony
 foretells!
 Through the balmy air of night
 How they ring out their delight!—
 From the molten-golden notes, 15
 And all in tune,
 What a liquid ditty floats
 To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
 On the moon!
 Oh, from out the sounding cells, 20
 What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
 How it swells!
 How it dwells
 On the Future!—how it tells
 Of the rapture that impels 25
 To the swinging and the ringing
 Of the bells, bells, bells—
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells—
 To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells! 30

III

Hear the loud alarum bells—
 Brazen bells!
 What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency 35
 tells!
 In the startled ear of night
 How they scream out their affright!
 Too much horrified to speak,
 They can only shriek, shriek, 40
 Out of tune,
 In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the
 fire,
 In a mad expostulation with the deaf and
 frantic fire, 45
 Leaping higher, higher, higher,
 With a desperate desire,
 And a resolute endeavor
 Now—now to sit, or never,
 By the side of the pale-faced moon. 50
 Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
 What a tale their terror tells
 Of Despair!

How they clang, and clash, and roar!
 What a horror they outpour
 On the bosom of the palpitating air!
 Yet the ear, it fully knows,
 By the twanging,
 And the clanging,
 How the danger ebbs and flows;
 Yet the ear distinctly tells,
 In the jangling,
 And the wrangling,
 How the danger sinks and swells,
 By the sinking of the swelling in the anger of
 the bells—
 Of the bells—
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells—
 In the clamor and the clangor of the bells!

IV

Hear the tolling of the bells—
 Iron bells!
 What a world of solemn thought their monody
 compels!
 In the silence of the night,
 How we shiver with affright
 At the melancholy menace of their tone!
 For every sound that floats
 From the rust within their throats
 Is a groan.
 And the people—ah, the people—
 They that dwell up in the steeple,
 All alone,
 And who tolling, tolling, tolling,
 In that muffled monotone,
 Feel a glory in so rolling
 On the human heart a stone—
 They are neither man nor woman—
 They are neither brute nor human—
 They are Ghouls:—
 And their king it is who tolls:—
 And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
 Rolls
 A pæan from the bells!
 And his merry bosom swells
 With the pæan of the bells!
 And he dances, and he yells;
 Keeping time, time, time,
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,
 To the pæan of the bells:—
 Of the bells:—
 Keeping time, time, time
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,
 To the throbbing of the bells—

Of the bells, bells, bells—
 To the sobbing of the bells,
 Keeping time, time, time,
 As he knells, knells, knells,
 In a happy Runic rhyme,
 To the rolling of the bells—
 Of the bells, bells, bells:—
 To the tolling of the bells—
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells— 10
 To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

ELDORADO

(1849)

"Like the tale *Von Kempelen and his Discovery*, 15
 it ["Eldorado"] is a product of the 'gold-excitement'
 of '49 and one of many evidences of Poe's interest
 in contemporary matters" (Killis Campbell).

Gaily bedight, 20
 A gallant knight,
 In sunshine and in shadow,
 Had journeyed long,
 Singing a song,
 In search of Eldorado. 25

But he grew old—
 This knight so bold—
 And o'er his heart a shadow
 Fell as he found 30
 No spot of ground
 That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
 Failed him at length, 35
 He met a pilgrim shadow—
 "Shadow," said he
 "Where can it be—
 This land of Eldorado?" 40

"Over the Mountains
 Of the Moon,
 Down the Valley of the Shadow,
 Ride, boldly ride," 45
 The shade replied,—
 "If you seek for Eldorado."

FOR ANNIE

(1849)

"Annie" was Mrs. Annie Richmond of Lowell, 50
 Mass., to whom Poe wrote March 23, 1849: "I think
 the lines 'For Annie' (those I now send) much the

best I have ever written, but an author can seldom
 depend on his own estimate of his own works, . . ."
 In 1875, when at last a monument was erected over
 Poe's grave in Baltimore, Longfellow suggested that
 the two last lines in the first stanza be inscribed on
 the monument,

Thank Heaven! the crisis,
 The danger, is past,
 And the lingering illness
 Is over at last—
 And the fever called "Living"
 Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know
 I am shorn of my strength,
 And no muscle I move
 As I lie at full length—
 But no matter!—I feel
 I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly
 Now, in my bed,
 That any beholder
 Might fancy me dead—
 Might start at beholding me,
 Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,
 The sighing and sobbing,
 Are quieted now,
 With that horrible throbbing
 At heart:—ah, that horrible,
 Horrible throbbing!

The sickness—the nausea—
 The pitiless pain—
 Have ceased, with the fever
 That maddened my brain—
 With the fever called "Living"
 That burned in my brain.

And oh! of all tortures
 That torture the worst
 Has abated—the terrible
 Torture of thirst
 For the naphthaline river
 Of Passion accurst:—
 I have drank of a water
 That quenches all thirst:—

Of a water that flows,
 With a lullaby sound,

From a spring but a very few
Feet under ground—
From a cavern not very far
Down under ground.

And ah! let it never
Be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy
And narrow my bed;
For a man never slept
In a different bed—
And, to *sleep*, you must slumber
In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit
Here blandly reposes,
Forgetting, or never
Regretting, its roses—
Its old agitations
Of myrtles and roses:

For now, while so quietly
Lying, it fancies
A holier odor
About it, of pansies—
A rosemary odor,
Commingle with pansies—
With rue and the beautiful
Puritan pansies.¹

And so it lies happily,
Bathing in many
A dream of the truth
And the beauty of Annie—
Drowned in a bath
Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,
She fondly caressed,
And then I fell gently
To sleep on her breast—
Deeply to sleep
From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished,
She covered me warm,
And she prayed to the angels
To keep me from harm—

To the queen of the angels
To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly,
Now, in my bed,
(Knowing her love),
That you fancy me dead—
And I rest so contentedly,
Now, in my bed
(With her love at my breast),
That you fancy me dead—
That you shudder to look at me,
Thinking me dead:—

But my heart it is brighter
Than all of the many
Stars in the sky,
For it sparkles with Annie—
It grows with the light
Of the love of my Annie—
With the thought of the light
Of the eyes of my Annie.

ANNABEL LEE

(1849)

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee:—
30 And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

She was a child and *I* was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
35 But we loved with a love that was more than
love—
I and my Annabel Lee—
With a love that the wingèd seraphs of Heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud by night
Chilling my Annabel Lee;
45 So that her highborn kinsmen¹ came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

50 The angels, not half so happy in Heaven,
Went envying her and me:—

¹ The angels.

¹ Compare Ophelia's words in *Hamlet*, Act IV, Scene v: "There's rosemary, that's for remembrance: pray you, love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for thoughts."

Yes! that was the reason (as all men know,
 In this kingdom by the sea)
 That the wind came out of the cloud, chilling
 And killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
 Of those who were older than we—
 Of many far wiser than we—
 And neither the angels in Heaven above
 Nor the demons down under the sea,
 Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
 Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:—

For the moon never beams without bringing me
 dreams
 Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;

And the stars never rise but I see the bright
 eyes

Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
 And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the
 side

5 Of my darling, my darling, my life and my
 bride,

In her sepulchre there by the sea—

In her tomb by the side of the sea.²

10 ² Professor Campbell comments "In a few in-
 stances it would seem that Poe gave up an accept-
 able reading for an inferior one. This happens,
 obviously, with his substitution of the colorless
 phrase 'by the side of the sea' for the finely resonant
 ending 'by the sounding sea' in the last line of
 15 *Annabel Lee*,

In her tomb by the sounding sea."

SEBA SMITH, "MAJOR JACK DOWNING"

1792 - 1868

Seba Smith, a native of Maine and a graduate of Bowdoin College, began in 1830 contrib-
 uting to the *Portland Courier* humorous sketches in dialect over the name "Major Jack
 Downing." They proved to be extremely popular and were widely imitated. The comic
 Yankee had appeared as early as 1787 in Royall Tyler's comedy, *The Contrast*, but Jack
 Downing is the first of a long line of humorous newspaper commentators on politics which
 includes Lowell's Hosea Biglow and extends down to Will Rogers and other twentieth-
 century humorists. (Southern humor, surprisingly, rarely deals with political matters.) Smith's
 sketches anticipate the local-color New England short stories of Harriet Beecher Stowe and
 other writers of the later nineteenth century. Jack Downing is a shrewd, uneducated, self-
 seeking countryman who follows the fortunes of Andrew Jackson. In his letters we find a very
 different New England from that generally pictured by the New England Brahmins. For
 Smith's life, see Mary Wyman, *Two American Pioneers* (1927). The standard work on the
 humorists is Walter Blair's *Native American Humor* (1937).

from THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF
MAJOR JACK DOWNING OF
DOWNINGVILLE

(1833)

TO COUSIN EPHRAIM DOWNING,
UP IN DOWNINGVILLE

PORTLAND, Monday, Jan. 18, 1830.

DEAR COUSIN EPHRAIM:—I now take my pen
in hand to let you know that I am well, hoping
these few lines will find you enjoying the same
blessing. When I come down to Portland I
didn't think o' staying more than three or four
days, if I could sell my load of ax handles, and
mother's cheese, and Cousin Nabby's bundle of
footings; but when I got here I found Uncle
Nat was gone a freighting down to Quoddy,
and Aunt Sally said as how I shouldn't stir a
step home till he come back agin, which won't
be this month. So here I am, loitering about
this great town, as lazy as an ox. Ax handles
don't fetch nothing; I couldn't hardly give 'em
away. Tell Cousin Nabby I sold her footings
for nine-pence a pair, and took it all in cotton
cloth. Mother's cheese come to seven and six-
pence; I got her half a pound of shushon, and
two ounces of snuff, and the rest in sugar. When
Uncle Nat comes home I shall put my ax handles
aboard of him, and let him take 'em to Boston
next time he goes; I saw a feller tother day, that
told me they'd fetch a good price there. I've
been here now a whole fortnight, and if I could
tell ye one half I've seen, I guess you'd stare
worse than if you'd seen a catamount I've been
to meeting, and to the museum, and to both
Legislators, the one they call the House, and the
one they call the Sinnet. I spose Uncle Joshua
is in a great hurry to hear something about these
Legislators; for you know he's always reading
newspapers, and talking politics, when he can
get anybody to talk with him. I've seen him when
he had five tons of hay in the field well made,
and a heavy shower coming up, stand two hours
disputing with Squire W. about Adams and Jack-
son—one calling Adams a tory and a fed, and
the other saying Jackson was a murderer and a
fool; so they kept it up, till the rain began to
pour down, and about spoilt all his hay.

Uncle Joshua may set his heart at rest about
the bushel of corn that he bet 'long with the
postmaster, that Mr. Ruggles would be Speaker

of that Legislater they call the House; for he's
lost it, slick as a whistle. As I hadn't much to do,
I've been there every day since they've been a
setting. A Mr. White, of Monmouth, was the
Speaker the first two days, and I can't see why
they didn't keep him in all the time; for he
seemed to be a very clever, good-natured sort of
man, and he had such a smooth, pleasant way
with him, that I couldn't help feeling sorry when
they turned him out and put in another. But
some said he wasn't put in hardly fair; and I
don't know as he was, for the first day, when they
were all coming in and crowding round, there
was a large, fat man, with a round, full, jolly
sort of a face. I suppose he was the captain, for he
got up and commanded them to come to order,
and then he told this Mr. White to whip into
the chair quicker than you could say Jack Robin-
son. Some of 'em scolded about it, and I heard
some, in a little room they called the lobby, say
'twas a mean trick; but I couldn't see why, for I
thought Mr. White made a capital Speaker, and
when *our* company turns out, the cap'n always
has a right to do as he's a mind to.

They kept disputing most all the time for the
first two days about a poor Mr. Roberts, from
Waterborough. Some said he shouldn't have a
seat because he adjourned the town meeting and
wasn't fairly elected. Others said it was no such
thing, and that he was elected as fairly as any of
'em. And Mr. Roberts himself said he was, and
said he could bring men that would swear to it,
and good men too. But, notwithstanding all this,
when they came to vote, they got three or four
majority that he shouldn't have a seat. And I
thought it a needless piece of cruelty, for they
wan't crowded, and there was a number of seats
empty. But they would have it so, and the poor
man had to go and stand up in the lobby.

Then they disputed about a Mr. Fowler's hav-
ing a seat. Some said he shouldn't have a seat,
because when he was elected some of his votes
were given for his father. But they were more
kind to him than they were to Mr. Roberts, for
they voted that he *should* have a seat; and I sup-
pose it was because they thought he had a lawful
right to inherit whatever was his father's. They
all declared there was no party politics about it,
and I don't think there was; for I noticed that
all who voted that Mr. Roberts should *not* have
a seat, voted that Mr. Fowler should. So, as they

all voted *both* ways, they must have been conscientious, and I don't see how there could be any party about it.

It's a pity they couldn't be allowed to have two Speakers, for they seemed to be very anxious to choose Mr. Ruggles and Mr. Goodenow. They two had every vote except one, and if they had had *that*, I believe they would both have been chosen; as it was, however, they both came within a humbird's eye of it. Whether it was Mr. Ruggles voted for Mr. Goodenow, or Mr. Goodenow for Mr. Ruggles, I can't exactly tell; but I rather guess it was Mr. Ruggles voted for Mr. Goodenow, for he appeared to be very glad to see Mr. Goodenow in the chair, and shook hands with him as good-natured as could be. I would have given half my load of ax handles if they could both have been so happy. But as they can't have but one Speaker at a time, and as Mr. Goodenow appears to understand the business very well, it is not likely Mr. Ruggles will be Speaker any this winter. So Uncle Joshua will have to shell out his bushel of corn, and I hope it will learn him better than to bet about politics again. Before I came from home, some of the papers said how there was a majority of ten or fifteen *National Republicans* in the Legislature, and the other party said there was a pretty clever little majority of *Democratic Republicans*. Well, now everybody says it has turned out jest as that queer little paper, called the Daily Courier, said 'twould. That paper said it was such a close rub it couldn't hardly tell which side would beat. And it's jest so, for they've been here now most a fortnight acting jest like two boys playin see-saw on a rail. First one goes up, and then 'tother; but I reckon one of the boys is rather heaviest, for once in a while he comes down chuck, and throws the other up into the air as though he would pitch him heads over heels. Your loving cousin till death.

JACK DOWNING.

COUSIN NABBY ADVISES MR. DOWNING TO COME HOME

DOWNINGVILLE, January 30, 1830.

DEAR COUSIN: If you were only here I would break the handle of our old birch broom over

your back for serving me such a caper. Here I have been waiting three weeks for that cotton cloth you got for the footings; and you know the meeting-house windows were to have been broke¹ a fortnight ago, if I had got it. And then I had to tell Sam I was waiting for some cotton cloth. He tried to keep in with all his might, but he burst out a laughing so, I'm a good mind to turn him off. But if I do, *you and he will be both in the same pickle*. You had better let them legislators alone; and if you can't sell your ax-handles, take 'em and come home and mind your business. There is Jemime Parsons romping about with the school-master, fair weather and foul. Last Wednesday she went sleigh-riding with him, and to-night she's going to the singing-school, and he is going to carry her. Last night she came over to our house, and wanted me to go to Uncle Zeke's to borrow their swifts, she said, when she knew we had some, and had borrowed them a dozen times. I said nothing, but went with her. When we got there who should we find but the school-master? I know Jemime knew it, and went there purpose to have him go home with her. She never askt for the swifts. Coming home the master askt her if she had seen your last letter. She said yes, and began to laugh and talk about you, just as though I was no relation. She said she guessed them legislators would try to make a Governor out of *you* next, if you staid there much longer. One of them steers you sold to Jacob Small that week you went to Portland died t'other day; and he says if we've no Governor this year he won't pay you a cent for 'em. So you have lost your steers and Jemime Parsons, jest by your dallying about there among them legislators. I say you had better come home and see to your own business. I s'pose father and brother Ephraim would like to have you stay there all winter and tell 'em about the Governors and legislators, but aunt wants her tea, and I want my cotton cloth, so I wish you'd make haste home and bring 'em.

Your Loving cousin,

NABBY

To Mr. Jack Downing.

¹ The law required that notices of intended marriages should be posted by the town clerk two or three weeks in advance; this was called breaking the meeting-house windows.

AUGUSTUS BALDWIN LONGSTREET

1790 - 1870

Longstreet was born at Augusta, Georgia. He graduated from Yale and became a successful lawyer and judge of the state superior court. He became a Methodist minister in 1840. Before he died, he had been president of Emory College, Centenary College, the University of Mississippi, and the University of South Carolina. *Georgia Scenes*, of which the author was in later years ashamed, has all the frankness of eighteenth-century English (or twentieth-century American) novelists and something of the realism of Fielding and Defoe. *Georgia Scenes* does not suffer from the genteel tradition which vitiates so much Victorian fiction on both sides of the Atlantic. Poe, who reviewed the volume in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, said of "The Fight"; "Although involving some horrible and disgusting details of Southern barbarity it is a sketch unsurpassed in dramatic vigor, and in the vivid truth to nature." The method of personal combat which Longstreet describes long flourished on the frontier in the West as well as in the South.

See John D. Wade's excellent biography, *Augustus Baldwin Longstreet* (1924); Walter Blair, *Native American Humor* (1937); and Jennette Tandy, *Crackerbox Philosophers* (1925).

THE FIGHT from GEORGIA SCENES, CHARACTERS, INCIDENTS,

&c., IN THE FIRST HALF CENTURY OF THE
REPUBLIC (1835)

In the younger days of the Republic there lived in the county of — two men, who were admitted on all hands to be the very *best men* in the county; which, in the Georgia vocabulary, means they could flog any other two men in the county. Each, through many a hard-fought

battle, had acquired the mastery of his own battalion; but they lived on opposite sides of the Courthouse, and in different battalions: Consequently, they were but seldom thrown together.

5 When they met, however, they were always very friendly; indeed, at their first interview, they seemed to conceive a wonderful attachment to each other, which rather increased than diminished as they became better acquainted; so that, 10 but for the circumstance which I am about to mention, the question, which had been a thousand times asked, "Which is the best man, Billy

Stallions (Stallings) or Bob Durham?" would probably never have been answered.

Billy ruled the upper battalion, and Bob the lower. The former measured six feet and an inch in his stockings, and, without a single pound of cumbrous flesh about him, weighed a hundred and eighty. The latter was an inch shorter than his rival, and ten pounds lighter; but he was much the most active of the two. In running and jumping he had but few equals in the county; and in wrestling, none. In other respects they were nearly equal. Both were admirable specimens of human nature in its finest form. Billy's victories had generally been achieved by the tremendous power of his blows, one of which had often proved decisive of his battles; Bob's, by his adroitness in bringing his adversary to the ground. This advantage he had never failed to gain at the onset, and, when gained, he never failed to improve it to the defeat of his adversary. These points of difference have involved the reader in a doubt as to the probable issue of a contest between them. It was not so, however, with the two battalions. Neither had the least difficulty in determining the point by the most natural and irresistible deductions *a priori*; and though, by the same course of reasoning, they arrived at directly opposite conclusions, neither felt its confidence in the least shaken by this circumstance. The upper battalion swore "that Billy only wanted one lick at him to knock his heart, liver, and lights out of him; and if he got two at him, he'd knock him into a cocked hat." The lower battalion retorted, "that he wouldn't have time to double his fist before Bob would put his head where his feet ought to be; and that, by the time he hit the ground, the meat would fly off his face so quick, that people would think it was shook off by the fall." These disputes often led to the *argumentum ad hominem*, but with such equality of success on both sides as to leave the main question just where they found it. They usually ended, however, in the common way, with a bet; and many a quart of old Jamaica (whiskey had not then supplanted rum) was staked upon the issue. Still, greatly to the annoyance of the curious, Billy and Bob continued to be good friends.

Now there happened to reside in the county just alluded to a little fellow by the name of Ransy Sniffle: a sprout of Richmond, who, in his earlier days, had fed copiously upon red clay

and blackberries. This diet had given to Ransy a complexion that a corpse would have disdained to own and an abdominal rotundity that was quite unprepossessing.¹ Long spells of the fever and ague, too, in Ransy's youth, had conspired with clay and blackberries to throw him quite out of the order of nature. His shoulders were fleshless and elevated; his head large and flat; his neck slim and translucent, and his arms, hands, fingers, and feet were lengthened out of all proportion to the rest of his frame. His joints were large and his limbs small; and as for flesh, he could not, with propriety, be said to have any. Those parts which nature usually supplies with the most of this article—the calves of the legs, for example—presented in him the appearance of so many well-drawn blisters. His height was just five feet nothing; and his average weight in blackberry season, ninety-five. I have been thus particular in describing him, for the purpose of showing what a great matter a little fire sometimes kindleth. There was nothing on this earth which delighted Ransy so much as a fight. He never seemed fairly alive except when he was witnessing, fomenting, or talking about a fight. Then, indeed, his deep-sunken gray eye assumed something of a living fire, and his tongue acquired a volubility that bordered upon eloquence. Ransy had been kept for more than a year in the most torturing suspense as to the comparative manhood of Billy Stallings and Bob Durham. He had resorted to all his usual expedients to bring them in collusion, and had entirely failed. He had faithfully reported to Bob all that had been said by the people in the upper battalion "agin him," and "he was sure Billy Stallings started it. He heard Billy say himself to Jim Brown, that he could whip him, or any other man in his battalion"; and this he told to Bob; adding, "Dod darn his soul, if he was a little bigger, if he'd let any man put upon his battalion in such a way." Bob replied, "If he (Stallings) thought so, he'd better come and try it." This Ransy carried to Billy, and delivered it with a spirit becoming his own dignity and the character of his battalion, and with a colouring well calculated to give it effect. These, and many other schemes which Ransy laid for the gratification of his curiosity, entirely failed of their object. Billy and Bob con-

¹ Ransy Sniffle obviously suffered from the hookworm disease, the cause of which was not known in Longstreet's time.

tinued friends, and Ransy had begun to lapse into the most tantalizing and hopeless despair, when a circumstance occurred which led to a settlement of the long-disputed question.

It is said that a hundred gamecocks will live in perfect harmony together if you do not put a hen with them; and so it would have been with Billy and Bob, had there been no women in the world. But there were women in the world, and from them each of our heroes had taken to himself a wife. The good ladies were no strangers to the prowess of their husbands, and, strange as it may seem, they presumed a little upon it.

The two battalions had met at the Courthouse upon a regimental parade. The two champions were there, and their wives had accompanied them. Neither knew the other's lady, nor were the ladies known to each other. The exercises of the day were just over, when Mrs Stallings and Mrs Durham stepped simultaneously into the store of Zephaniah Atwater, from "down east."

"Have you any Turkey-red?" said Mrs. S.

"Have you any curtain calico?" said Mrs. D. at the same moment.

"Yes, ladies," said Mr Atwater, "I have both."

"Then help me first," said Mrs. D., "for I'm in a hurry."

"I'm in as great a hurry as she is," said Mrs. S., "and I'll thank you to help me first."

"And, pray, who are you, madam?" continued the other.

"Your betters, madam," was the reply.

At this moment Billy Stallings stepped in. "Come," said he, "Nancy, let's be going; it's getting late."

"I'd a been gone half an hour ago," she replied, "if it hadn't a' been for that impudent huzzy."

"Who do you call an impudent huzzy, you nasty, good-for-nothing, snaggle-toothed gaub of fat, you?" returned Mrs. D.

"Look here, woman," said Billy, "have you got a husband here? If you have, I'll *lick* him till he learns to teach you better manners, you *sassy* heifer you."

At this moment something was seen to rush out of the store as if ten thousand hornets were stinging it; crying, "Take care—let me go—don't hold me—where's Bob Durham?" It was Ransy Sniffle, who had been listening in breathless delight to all that had passed.

"Yonder's Bob, setting on the Courthouse steps," cried one. "What's the matter?"

"Don't talk to me!" said Ransy "Bob Durham, you'd better go long yonder, and take care of your wife. They're playing h—I with her there, in Zeph Atwater's store. Dod eternally darn my soul, if any man was to talk to my wife as Bill Stallions is talking to yours, if I wouldn't drive blue blazes through him in less than no time"

Bob sprang to the store in a minute, followed by a hundred friends; for the bully of a county never wants friends.

"Bill Stallions," said Bob, as he entered, "what have you been saying to my wife?"

"Is that your wife?" inquired Billy, obviously much surprised and a little disconcerted.

"Yes, she is, and no man shall abuse her, I don't care who he is."

"Well," rejoined Billy, "it ain't worth while to go over it; I've said enough for a fight: and, if you'll step out, we'll settle it!"

"Billy," said Bob, "are you for a fair fight?"

"I am," said Billy. "I've heard much of your manhood, and I believe I'm a better man than you are. If you will go into a ring with me, we can settle the dispute."

"Choose your friends," said Bob; "make your ring, and I'll be in with mine as soon as you will."

They both stepped out, and began to strip very deliberately, each battalion gathering round its champion, except Ransy, who kept himself busy in a most honest endeavour to hear and see all that transpired in both groups at the same time. He ran from one to the other in quick succession; peeped here and listened there; talked to this one, then to that one, and then to himself; squatted under one's legs and another's arms and, in the short interval between stripping and stepping into the ring, managed to get himself trod on by half of both battalions. But Ransy was not the only one interested upon this occasion; the most intense interest prevailed everywhere. Many were the conjectures, doubts, oaths, and imprecations uttered while the parties were preparing for the combat. All the knowing ones were consulted as to the issue, and they all agreed, to a man, in one of two opinions: either that Bob would flog Billy, or Billy would flog Bob. We must be permitted, however, to dwell for a moment upon the opinion of Squire Thomas Loggins; a man who, it was said, had

never failed to predict the issue of a fight in all his life. Indeed, so unerring had he always proved in this regard, that it would have been counted the most obstinate infidelity to doubt for a moment after he had delivered himself. Squire Loggins was a man who said but little, but that little was always delivered with the most imposing solemnity of look and cadence. He always wore the aspect of profound thought, and you could not look at him without coming to the conclusion that he was elaborating truth from its most intricate combinations.

"Uncle Tommy," said Sam Reynolds, "you can tell us all about it if you will; how will the fight go?"

The question immediately drew an anxious group around the squire. He raised his teeth slowly from the head of his walking cane, on which they had been resting; pressed his lips closely and thoughtfully together; threw down his eyebrows, dropped his chin, raised his eyes to an angle of twenty-three degrees, paused about half a minute, and replied, "Sammy, watch Robert Durham close in the beginning of the fight; take care of William Stallions in the middle of it; and see who has the wind at the end." As he uttered the last member of the sentence, he looked slyly at Bob's friends, and winked very significantly; whereupon they rushed, with one accord, to tell Bob what Uncle Tommy had said. As they retired, the squire turned to Billy's friends, and said, with a smile, "Them boys think I mean that Bob will whip."

Here the other party kindled into joy, and hastened to inform Billy how Bob's friends had deceived themselves as to Uncle Tommy's opinion. In the mean time the principles and seconds were busily employed in preparing themselves for the combat. The plan of attack and defence, the manner of improving the various turns of the conflict, "the best mode of saving wind," &c., &c., were all discussed and settled. At length Billy announced himself ready, and his crowd were seen moving to the centre of the Courthouse Square; he and his five seconds in the rear. At the same time, Bob's party moved to the same point, and in the same order. The ring was now formed, and for a moment the silence of death reigned through both battalions. It was soon interrupted, however, by the cry of "Clear the way!" from Billy's seconds; when the ring opened in the centre of the upper battalion (for the

order of march had arranged the centre of the two battalions on opposite sides of the circle), and Billy stepped into the ring from the east, followed by his friends. He was stripped to the trousers, and exhibited an arm, breast, and shoulders of the most tremendous portent. His step was firm, daring, and martial, and as he bore his fine form a little in advance of his friends, an involuntary burst of triumph broke from his side of the ring; and, at the same moment, an uncontrollable thrill of awe ran along the whole curve of the lower battalion.

"Look at him!" was heard from his friends; "just look at him."

"Ben, how much you ask to stand before that man two seconds?"

"Pshaw, don't talk about it! Just thinkin' about it's broke three o' my ribs a'ready!"

"What's Bob Durham going to do when Billy lets that arm loose upon him?"

"God bless your soul, he'll think thunder and lightning a mint julip to it."

"Oh, look here, men, go take Bill Stallions out o' that ring' and bring in Phil Johnson's stud horse. so that Durham may have some chance! I don't want to see the man killed right away."

These and many other like expressions, interspersed thickly with oaths of the most modern coinage, were coming from all points of the upper battalion, while Bob was adjusting the girth of his pantaloons, which walking had discovered not to be exactly right. It was just fixed to his mind, his foes becoming a little noisy, and his friends a little uneasy at his delay, when Billy called out, with a smile of some meaning, "Where's the bully of the lower battalion? I'm getting tired of waiting."

"Here he is," said Bob, lighting, as it seemed, from the clouds into the ring, for he had actually bounded clear of the head of Ransy Sniffle into the circle. His descent was quite as imposing as Billy's entry, and excited the same feelings, but in opposite bosoms.

Voices of exultation now rose at his side.

"Where did he come from?"

"Why," said one of his seconds (all having just entered), "we were girting him up, about a hundred yards out yonder, when he heard Billy ask for the bully; and he fetched a leap over the Courthouse, and went out of sight; but I told them to come on, they'd find him here."

Here the lower battalion burst into a peal of laughter, mingled with a look of admiration, which seemed to denote their entire belief of what they had heard.

"Boys, widen the ring, so as to give him room to jump."

"Oh, my little flying wild-cat, hold him if you can! and, when you get him fast, hold lightning next."

"Ned, what do you think he's made of?"

"Steel springs and chicken-hawk, God bless you!"

"Gentlemen," said one of Bob's seconds, "I understand it is to be a fair fight; catch as catch can, rough and tumble: no man touch till one or the other halloos"

"That's the rule," was the reply from the other side.

"Are you ready?"

"We are ready."

At the word, Bob dashed at his antagonist at full speed: and Bill squared himself to receive him with one of his most fatal blows. Making his calculation, from Bob's velocity, of the time when he would come within striking distance, he let drive with tremendous force. But Bob's onset was obviously planned to avoid this blow; for, contrary to all expectations, he stopped short just out of arm's reach, and, before Billy could recover his balance, Bob had him "all underhold." The next second, sure enough, "found Billy's head where his feet ought to be." How it was done no one could tell; but, as if by supernatural power, both Billy's feet were thrown full half his own height in the air, and he came down with a force that seemed to shake the earth. As he struck the ground, commingled shouts, screams, and yells burst from the lower battalion, loud enough to be heard for miles "Hurra, my little hornet!" "Save him!" "Feed him!" "Give him the Durham physic till his stomach turns!" Billy was no sooner down than Bob was on him, and lending him awful blows about the face and breast. Billy made two efforts to rise by main strength, but failed. "Lord bless you, man, don't try to get up! Lay still and take it! you bleege to have it!"

Billy now turned his face suddenly to the ground, and rose upon his hands and knees. Bob jerked up both his hands and threw him on his face. He again recovered his late position, of which Bob endeavored to deprive him as before;

but, missing one arm, he failed, and Billy rose. But he had scarcely resumed his feet before they flew up as before, and he came again to the ground. "No fight, gentlemen!" cried Bob's friends; "the man can't stand up! Bouncing feet are bad things to fight in." His fall, however, was this time comparatively light; for, having thrown his right arm round Bob's neck, he carried his head down with him. This grasp, which was obstinately maintained, prevented Bob from getting on him, and they lay head to head, seeming, for a time, to do nothing. Presently they rose, as if by mutual consent; and, as they rose, a shout burst from both battalions. "Oh, my lark!" cried the east, "has he foxed you? Do you begin to feel him? He's only beginning to fight; he ain't got warm yet."

"Look yonder!" cried the west; "didn't I tell you so! He hit the ground so hard it jarred his nose off. Now ain't he a pretty man as he stands? He shall have my sister Sal just for his pretty looks. I want to get in the breed of them sort o' men, to drive ugly out of my kinfolds."

I looked, and saw that Bob had entirely lost his left ear, and a large piece from his left cheek. His right eye was a little discoloured, and the blood flowed profusely from his wounds.

Billy presented a hideous spectacle. About a third of his nose, at the lower extremity, was bit off, and his face so swelled and bruised that it was difficult to discover in it anything of the human visage, much more the fine features which he carried into the ring.

They were up only long enough for me to make the foregoing discoveries, when down they went again, precisely as before. They no sooner touched the ground than Bill relinquished his hold upon Bob's neck. In this he seemed to all to have forfeited the only advantage which put him upon an equality with his adversary. But the movement was soon explained. Bill wanted this arm for other purposes than defence; and he had made arrangements whereby he knew that he could make it answer these purposes; for, when they arose again, he had the middle finger of Bob's left hand in his mouth. He was now secure from Bob's annoying trips; and he began to lend his adversary tremendous blows, every one of which was hailed by a shout from his friends. "Bullets!" "Hoss-kicking!" "Thunder!" "That'll do for his face; now feel his short ribs, Billy!"

I now considered the contest settled. I deemed

it impossible for any human being to withstand for five seconds the loss of blood which issued from Bob's ear, cheek, nose, and finger, accompanied with such blows as he was receiving. Still he maintained the conflict, and gave blow for blow with considerable effect. But the blows of each became slower and weaker after the first three or four; and it became obvious that Bill wanted the room which Bob's finger occupied for breathing. He would therefore probably, in a short time, have let it go, had not Bob anticipated his politeness by jerking away his hand, and making him a present of the finger. He now seized Bill again, and brought him to his knees, but he recovered. He again brought him to his knees, and he again recovered. A third effort, however, brought him down, and Bob on top of him. These efforts seemed to exhaust the little remaining strength of both; and they lay, Bill undermost and Bob across his breast, motionless, and panting for breath. After a short pause, Bob gathered his hand full of dirt and sand, and was in the act of grinding it in his adversary's eye's when Bill cried "ENOUGH!" Language cannot describe the scene that followed; the shouts, oaths, frantic gestures, taunts, replies and little fights, and therefore I shall not attempt it. The champions were borne off by their seconds and washed; when many a bleeding wound and ugly bruise was discovered on each which no eye had seen before. Many had gathered round Bob, and were in various ways congratulating him, when a voice from the centre of the circle cried out, "Boys, hush and listen to me!" It proceeded from Squire Loggins, who had made his way to Bob's side, and had gathered his face up into one of its most flattering and intelligible expressions. "Gentlemen," continued he, with a most knowing smile, "is — Sammy — Reynolds — in — this — company — of — gentlemen?"

"Yes," said Sam, "here I am."

"Sammy," said the squire, winking to the company, and drawing the head of his cane to his mouth with an arch smile as he closed, "I — wish — you — to — tell — cousin — Bobby — and — these — gentlemen here present — what — your — Uncle — Tommy — said — before — the — fight began?"

"Oh! get away, Uncle Tom," said Sam, smiling (the squire winked), "you don't know nothing about *fighting*." (The squire winked again.) "All you know about it is how it'll begin, how it'll go on, how it'll end; that's all. Cousin Bob, when you going to fight again, just go to the old man, and let him tell you all about it. If he can't, don't ask nobody else nothing about it, I tell you."

The squire's foresight was complimented in many ways by the by-standers; and he retired, advising "the boys to be at peace, as fighting was a bad business."

Durham and Stallings kept their beds for several weeks, and did not meet again for two months. When they met, Billy stepped up to Bob and offered his hand, saying, "Bobby, you've *licked* me a fair fight; but you wouldn't have done it if I hadn't been in the wrong. I oughtn't to have treated your wife as I did; and I felt so through the whole fight; and it sort o' cowed me."

"Well, Billy," said Bob, "let's be friends. Once in the fight, when you had my finger in your mouth, and was peeling me in the face and breast, I was going to halloo; but I thought of Betsy, and knew the house would be too hot for me if I got whipped when fighting for her, after always whipping when I fought for myself."

"Now that's what I always love to see," said a bystander. "It's true I brought about the fight, but I wouldn't have done it if it hadn't o' been on account of Miss (Mrs.) Durham. But dod eternally darn my soul, if I ever could stand by and see any woman put upon, much less Miss Durham. If Bobby hadn't been there, I'd o' took it up myself, be darned if I wouldn't, even if I'd o' got whipped for it. But we're all friends now." The reader need hardly be told that this was Ransy Sniffle.

Thanks to the Christian religion, to schools, colleges, and benevolent associations, such scenes of barbarism and cruelty as that which I have been just describing are now of rare occurrence, though they may still be occasionally met with in some of the new counties. Wherever they prevail, they are a disgrace to that community. The peace-officers who countenance them deserve a place in the Penitentiary.

JOHNSON JONES HOOPER

1815 - 1862

Hooper was born in North Carolina and he died in Richmond, Virginia, but he was living in Alabama when he won his fame as a humorist. He was a lawyer and a journalist. The Simon Suggs sketches first appeared in an Alabama newspaper. They were reprinted in the New York *Spirit of the Times*, which contains much of the newspaper humor of the period, and appeared in book form in Philadelphia, 1845, under the title: *Adventures of Captain Simon Suggs, Late of the Tallapoosa Volunteers; together with "Taking the Census," and Other Alabama Sketches*. See Walter Blair, *Native American Humor* (1937) and Jennette Tandy, *Crackerbox Philosophers* (1925).

Suggs, who is an out-and-out rascal, has for his motto, "It is good to be shifty in a new country." In the flush times of frontier Alabama he makes his living by cheating every one he can. Hooper's picaresque story, which is said to have delighted Thackeray, takes the form of a campaign biography. It concludes with an appeal that voters elect Suggs sheriff: "His military services; his numerous family; his long residence among you; his gray hairs—all plead for him! Remember him at the polls!"

from ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN
SIMON SUGGS (1845)

CHAPTER THE TENTH. THE CAPTAIN
ATTENDS A CAMP-MEETING

Captain Suggs found himself as poor at the conclusion of the Creek war, as he had been at its commencement. Although no "arbitrary," "despotic," "corrupt," and "unprincipled" judge had fined him a thousand dollars for his proclamation of martial law at Fort Suggs, or the enforcement of its rules in the case of Mrs. Haycock; yet somehow—the thing is alike inexplic-

able to him and to us—the money which he had contrived, by various shifts to obtain, melted away and was gone for ever. To a man like the Captain, of intense domestic affections, this state of destitution was most distressing. "He could stand it himself—didn't care a d—n for it, no way," he observed, but the old woman and the children; *that* bothered him!"

As he sat one day, ruminating upon the unpleasant condition of his "financial concerns," Mrs. Suggs informed him that "the sugar and coffee was nigh about out," and that there were not "a dozen j'int's and middlins, *all put to-*

gether, in the smoke-house." Suggs bounced up on the instant, exclaiming, "D—n it! *somebody* must suffer!" But whether this remark was intended to convey the idea that he and his family were about to experience the want of the necessities of life; or that some other, and as yet unknown, individual should "suffer" to prevent that prospective exigency, must be left to the commentators, if perchance any of that ingenious class of persons should hereafter see proper to write notes for this history. It is enough for us that we give all the facts in this connection, so that ignorance of the subsequent conduct of Captain Suggs may not lead to an erroneous judgment in respect to his words.

Having uttered the exclamation we have repeated—and perhaps, hurriedly walked once or twice across the room—Captain Suggs drew on his famous old green-blanket overcoat, and ordered his horse, and within five minutes was on his way to a camp-meeting, then in full blast on Sandy creek, twenty miles distant, where he hoped to find amusement, at least. When he arrived there, he found the hollow square of the encampment filled with people, listening to the mid-day sermon and its dozen accompanying "exhortations." A half-dozen preachers were dispensing the word; the one in the pulpit, a meek-faced old man, of great simplicity and benevolence. His voice was weak and cracked, notwithstanding which, however, he contrived to make himself heard occasionally, above the din of the exhorting, the singing, and the shouting which were going on around him. The rest were walking to and fro (engaged in the other exercises we have indicated) among the "mourners"—a host of whom occupied the seat set apart for their especial use—or made personal appeals to the mere spectators. The excitement was intense. Men and women rolled about on the ground, or lay sobbing or shouting in promiscuous heaps. More than all, the negroes sang and screamed and prayed. Several, under the influence of what is technically called "the jerks," were plunging and pitching about with convulsive energy. The great object of all seemed to be, to see who could make the greatest noise—

*"And each—for madness ruled the hour—
Would try his own expressive power."*¹

"Bless my poor old soul!" screamed the

¹ From William Collins's ode, "The Passions."

preacher in the pulpit; "ef yonder aint a squad in that corner that we aint got one outen yet! It'll never do"—raising his voice—"you must come outen that! Brother Fant, fetch up that youngster in the blue coat! I see the Lord's a-workin' upon him! Fetch him along—glory yes!—hold to him!"

"Keep the thing warm!" roared a sensual seeming man, of stout mould and florid countenance, who was exhorting among a bevy of young women, upon whom he was lavishing caresses. "Keep the thing warm, breethring!—come to the Lord, honey!" he added, as he vigorously hugged one of the damsels he sought to save

"Oh, I've got him!" said another in exulting tones, as he led up a gawky youth among the mourners—"I've got him—he tried to git off, but—ha! Lord!"—shaking his head as much as to say, it took a smart fellow to escape him—"ha! Lord!"—and he wiped the perspiration from his face with one hand, and with the other, patted his neophyte on the shoulder—"he couldn't do it! No! Then he tried to argy wi' me—but bless the Lord!—he couldn't do that nother! Ha! Lord! I tuk him, fust in the Old Testament—bless the Lord!—and I argyed him all thro' Kings—then I throwed him into Proverbs—and from that, here we had it up and down, kleeer down to the New Testament, and then I begun to see it work him!—then we got into Matthy, and from Matthy right straight along to Acts; and *thar* I throwed him! Y-e-s L-o-r-d!"—assuming the nasal twang and high pitch which are, in some parts, considered the perfection of rhetorical art—"Y-e-s L-o-r-d! and h-e-r-e he is! Now g-i-t down *thar*," addressing the subject, "and s-e-e ef the L-o-r-d won't do somethin' f-o-r you!" Having thus deposited his charge among the mourners, he started out, summarily to convert another soul!

"Gl-o-ree!" yelled a huge, greasy negro woman, as in a fit of the jerks, she threw herself convulsively from her feet, and fell "like a thousand of bricks," across a diminutive old man in a little round hat, who was speaking consolation to one of the mourners.

"Good Lord, have mercy!" ejaculated the little man earnestly and unaffectedly, as he strove to crawl from under the sable mass which was crushing him.

In another part of the square a dozen old women were singing. They were in a state of absolute extasy, as their shrill pipes gave forth,

*"I rode on the sky,
Quite ondestified I,
And the moon it was under my feet!"*

Near these last, stood a delicate woman in that hysterical condition in which the nerves are uncontrollable, and which is vulgarly—and almost blasphemously—termed the "holy laugh." A hideous grin distorted her mouth, and was accompanied with a maniac's chuckle, while every muscle and nerve of her face twitched and jerked in horrible spasms.²

Amid all this confusion and excitement Suggs stood unmoved. He viewed the whole affair as a grand deception—a sort of "opposition line" running against his own, and looked on with a sort of professional jealousy. Sometimes he would mutter running comments upon what passed before him.

"Well, now," said he, as he observed the full-faced brother who was "officiating," among the women, "that ere feller takes *my* eye!—thar he's been this half-hour, a-figurin amongst them galls, and's never said the fust word to nobody else. Wonder what's the reason these here preachers never hugs up the old, ugly women? Never seed one do it in my life—the sperrit never moves 'em that way! It's nater tho'; and the women, *they* never flocks round one o' the old dried-up breethring—bet two to one old splinter-legs thar,"—nodding at one of the ministers—"won't git a chance to say turkey to a good-lookin gall to-day! Well! who blames 'em? Nater will be nater, all the world over; and I judge ef I was a preacher, I should save the purtiest souls fust, myself!"

While the Captain was in the middle of this conversation with himself, he caught the attention of the preacher in the pulpit, who inferring from an indescribable something about his appearance that he was a person of some consequence, immediately determined to add him at

² The reader is requested to bear in mind, that the scenes described in this chapter are not *now* to be witnessed. Eight or ten years ago, all classes of population of the Creek country were very different from what they now are. Of course, no disrespect is intended to any denomination of Christians. We believe that camp-meetings are not peculiar to any church, though most usual in the Methodist—a denomination whose respectability in Alabama is attested by the fact, that *very many* of its worthy clergymen and lay members, hold honourable and profitable offices in the gift of the state legislature; of which, indeed, almost a controlling portion are themselves Methodists. (Author's note.)

once to the church if it could be done; and to that end began a vigorous, direct personal attack.

"Breethring," he exclaimed, "I see yonder a man that's a sinner, I *know* he's a sinner! Thar he stands," pointing at Simon, "a missubble old crittur, with his head a-blossomin for the grave! A few more short years, and d-o-w-n he'll go to perdition, lessen the Lord have mer-cy on him! Come up here, you old hoary-headed sinner, a-n-d git down upon your knees, a-n-d put up your cry for the Lord to snatch you from the bottomless pit! Your're ripe for the devil—you're b-o-u-n-d for hell, and the Lord only knows what'll become on you!"

"D—n it," thought Suggs, "*ef* I only had you down in the krick swamp for a minit or so, I'd show you who's *old*! I'd alter your tune *mighty* sudden, you sassy, 'sautful³ old rascal!" But he judiciously held his tongue and gave no utterance to the thought.

The attention of many having been directed to the Captain by the preacher's remarks, he was soon surrounded by numerous well-meaning, and doubtless very pious persons, each one of whom seemed bent on the application of his own particular recipe for the salvation of souls. For a long time the Captain stood silent, or answered the incessant stream of exhortation only with a sneer; but as length, his countenance began to give token of inward emotion. First his eye-lids twitched—then his upper lip quivered—next a transparent drop formed on one of his eye-lashes and a similar one on the tip of his nose—and, at last, a sudden bursting of air from nose and mouth, told that Captain Suggs was overpowered by his emotions. At the moment of the explosion, he made a feint as if to rush from the crowd, but he was in experienced hands, who well knew that the battle was more than half won.

"Hold to him!" said one—"it's a-working in him as strong as a Dick horse!"

"Pour it into him," said another, "it'll all come right directly!"

"That's the way I love to see 'em do," observed a third; "when you begin to draw water from their eyes, taint gwine to be long afore you'll have 'em on their knees!"

And so they clung to the Captain manfully, and half dragged, half led him to the mourner's bench; by which he threw himself down, altogether unmanned, and bathed in tears. Great

³ Deceitful.

was the rejoicing of the brethren, as they sang, shouted, and prayed around him—for by this time it had come to be generally known that the “convicted” old man was Captain Simon Suggs, the very “chief of sinners” in all that region.

The Captain remained grovelling in the dust during the usual time, and gave vent to even more than the requisite number of sobs, and groans, and heart-piercing cries. At length, when the proper time had arrived, he bounced up, and with a face radiant with joy commenced a series of vaultings and tumblings, which “laid in the shade” all previous performances of the sort at that camp-meeting. The brethren were in extasies at this demonstrative evidence of completion of the work; and whenever Suggs shouted “Gloreel” at the top of his lungs, every one of them shouted it back, until the woods rang with echoes.

The effervescence having partially subsided, Suggs was put upon his pins to relate his experience, which he did somewhat in this style—first brushing the tear-drops from his eyes, and giving the end of his nose a preparatory wring with his fingers, to free it of the superabundant moisture:

“Friends,” he said, “it don’t take long to curry a short horse, accordin’ to the old sayin’, and I’ll give you the perticklers of the way I was brought to a knowledge”—here the Captain wiped his eyes, brushed the tip of his nose and snuffled a little—“in less’n no time.”

“Praise the Lord!” ejaculated a bystander.

“You see I come here full o’ romancin’ and devilment, and jist to make game of all the purceedins. Well, sure enough, I done so for some time, and was a-thinkin how I should play some trick—”

“Dear soul alive! *don’t* he talk sweet!” cried an old lady in black silk—“Whar’s John Dobbs? You Sukey!” screaming at a negro woman on the other side of the square—“ef you don’t hunt up your mass John in a minute, and have him here to listen to this ’sperience, I’ll tuck you up when I git home and give you a hundred and fifty lashes, madam!—see ef I don’t! Blessed Lord!”—referring again to the Captain’s relation—“aint it a *precious* ’scource!”⁴

“I was jist a-thinkin’ how I should play some trick to turn it all into redecule, when they began to come round me and talk. Long at fust I didn’t mind it, but arter a little that brother”

—pointing to the reverend gentleman who had so successfully carried the unbeliever through the Old and New Testaments, and who Simon was convinced was the “big dog of the tanyard”—“that brother spoke a word that struck me kleen to the heart, and run all over me, like fire in dry grass—”

“*I-I-I* can bring ’em!” cried the preacher alluded to, in a tone of exultation—“Lord thou knows ef thy servant can’t stir ’em up, nobody else needn’t try—but the glory aint mine! I’m a poor worrum of the dust,” he added, with ill-managed affectation.

“And so from that I felt somethin’ a-pullin’ me inside—”

“Grace! grace! nothin’ but grace!” exclaimed one; meaning that “grace” had been operating in the Captain’s gastric region.

“And then,” continued Suggs, “I wanted to git off, but they hilt me, and bimeby I felt so missuble, I had to go yonder”—pointing to the mourners’ seat—“and when I lay down thar it got wuss and wuss, and ‘peared like somethin’ was a-mashin’ down on my back—”

“That was his load o’ sin,” said one of the brethren—“never mind, it’ll tumble off presently, see ef it don’t!” and he shook his head professionally and knowingly.

“And it kept a-gittin heavier and heavier, ontwell it looked like it might be a four year old steer, or a big pine log, or somethin’ of that sort—”

“Glory to my soul,” shouted Mrs. Dobbs, “it’s the sweetest talk I *ever* hearn! You Sukey! aint you got John yit? Never mind, my lady, I’ll settle wi’ you!” Sukey quailed before the finger which her mistress shook at her.

“And arter awhile,” Suggs went on, “‘peared like I fell into a trance, like, and I seed—”

“Now we’ll git the good on it” cried one of the sanctified.

“And I seed the biggest, longest, rip-roarest, blackest, scaliest—” Captain Suggs paused, wiped his brow, and ejaculated “Ah, L-o-r-d!” so as to give full time for curiosity to become impatience to know what he saw.

“*Sarpent!* warn’t it?” asked one of the preachers.

“No, not a serpent,” replied Suggs, blowing his nose.

“Do tell us *what* it war, soul alive!—whar is John?” said Mrs. Dobbs.

⁴ Discourse.

"Allegator!" said the Captain.

"Alligator!" repeated every woman present, and screamed for very life.

Mrs. Dobbs' nerves were so shaken by the announcement, that after repeating the horrible word, she screamed to Sukey, "You Sukey, I say, you Su-u-ke-e-y! ef you let John come a-nigh this way, whar the dreadful alliga—shaw! what am I thinkin' 'bout? 'Twarn't nothin' but a vishin!"

"Well," said the Captain in continuation, "the allegator kept a-comin' and a-comin' to'ards me, with his great long jaws a-gapin' open like a ten-foot pair o' tailors' shears——"

"Oh! oh! oh! Lord! gracious above!" cried the women.

"SATAN!" was the laconic ejaculation of the oldest preacher present, who thus informed the congregation that it was the devil which had attacked Suggs in the shape of an alligator.

"And then I concluded the jig was up, 'thout I could block his game some way; for I seed his idee was to snap off my head——"

The women screamed again.

"So I fixed myself jist like I was perfectly willin' for him to take my head, and rather he'd do it as not"—here the women shuddered perceptibly—"and so I hilt my head straight out"—the Captain illustrated by elongating his neck—"and when he come up and was a gwine to *shet down* on it, I jist pitched in a big rock which choked him to death, and that minit I felt the weight slide off, and I had the best feelins—sorter like you'll have from *good* sperrits—any body ever had!"

"Didn't I *tell* you so? Didn't I *tell* you so?" asked the brother who had predicted the off-tumbling of the load of sin. "Ha, Lord! fool *who*? I've been *all* along *thar*!—yes, *all* along *thar*! and I know every inch of the way jist as good as I do the road home!" and then he turned round and round, and looked at all, to receive a silent tribute to his superior penetration.

Captain Suggs was now the "lion of the day." Nobody could pray so well, or exhort so movingly, as "brother Suggs." Nor did his natural modesty prevent the performance of appropriate exercises. With the reverend Bela Bugg (him to whom, under providence, he ascribed his conversion) he was a most especial favourite. They walked, sang, and prayed together for hours.

"Come, come up; *thar's* room for all!" cried brother Bugg, in his evening exhortation. "Come

to the 'seat,' and ef you won't pray yourselves, let *me* pray for you!"

"Yes!" said Simon, by way of assisting his friend; "it's a game that all can win at! Ante up! ante up, boys—friends, I mean—don't back out!"

"Thar aint a sinner here," said Bugg, "no matter ef his soul's black as a nigger, but what *thar's* room for him!"

"No matter what sort of a hand you've got," added Simon in the fulness of his benevolence; "take stock! Here am *I*, the wickedest and blindest of sinners—has spent my whole life in the sarvice of the devil—has now come in on *narry* *pain* and won a *pile*!" and the Captain's face beamed with holy pleasure.

"D-o-n't be afeard!" cried the preacher; "come along! the meanest won't be turned away! humble yourselves and come!"

"No!" said Simon, still indulging in his favourite style of metaphor; "the bluff game aint played here! No runnin' of a body off! every body holds four aces, and when you bet, you win!"

And thus the Captain continued, until the services were concluded, to assist in adding to the number at the mourners' seat; and up to the hour of retiring, he exhibited such enthusiasm in the cause, that he was unanimously voted to be the most efficient addition the church had made during that meeting.

The next morning, when the preacher of the day first entered the pulpit, he announced that "brother Simon Suggs," mourning over his past iniquities, and desirous of going to work in the cause as speedily as possible, would take up a collection to found a church in his own neighborhood, at which he hoped to make himself useful as soon as he could prepare himself for the ministry, which the preacher didn't doubt, would be in a very few weeks, as brother Suggs was "a man of mighty good *judgment*, and of a *great* *discorse*." The funds were to be collected by "brother Suggs," and held in trust by brother Bela Bugg, who was the financial officer of the circuit, until some arrangement could be made to build a suitable house.

"Yes, breethring," said the Captain, rising to his feet; "I want to start a little 'sociation close to me, and I want you all to help. I'm mighty poor myself, as poor as any of you—don't leave breethring"—observing that several of the well-to-do were about to go off—"don't leave; ef you aint

able to afford any thing, jist give us your blessin' and it'll be all the same!"

This insinuation did the business, and the sensitive individuals re-seated themselves

"It's mighty little of this world's goods I've got," resumed Suggs, pulling off his hat and holding it before him; "but I'll bury *that* in the cause any how," and he deposited his last five-dollar bill in the hat.

There was a murmur of approbation at the Captain's liberality throughout the assembly.

Suggs now commenced collecting, and very prudently attacked first the gentlemen who had shown a disposition to escape. These, to exculpate themselves from any thing like poverty, contributed handsomely.

"Look here, breethring," said the Captain, displaying the banknotes thus received, "brother Snooks has drapt a five wi' me, and brother Snodgrass a ten! In course 'taint expected that you *that aint as well off as them*, will give *as much*; let every one give *accordin'* to ther means."

This was another chain-shot that raked as it went! "Who so low" as not to be able to contribute as much as Snooks and Snodgrass?

"Here's all the *small* money I've got about me," said a burly old fellow, ostentatiously handing to Suggs, over the heads of a half dozen, a ten dollar bill.

"That's what I call maganimus!" exclaimed the Captain; "that's the way *every* rich man ought to do!"

These examples were followed, more or less closely, by almost all present, for Simon had excited the pride of purse of the congregation, and a very handsome sum was collected in a very short time.

The reverend Mr. Bugg, as soon as he observed that our hero had obtained all that was to be had at that time, went to him and inquired what amount had been collected. The Captain replied that it was still uncounted, but that it couldn't be much under a hundred.

"Well, brother Suggs, you'd better count it and turn it over to me now. I'm goin' to leave presently."

"No!" said Suggs—"can't do it!"

"Why?—what's the matter?" inquired Bugg.

"It's got to be *prayed over*, fust!" said Simon, a heavenly smile illuminating his whole face.

"Well," replied Bugg, "less go one side and do it!"

"No!" said Simon, solemnly.

Mr. Bugg gave a look of inquiry,

"You see that krick swamp?" asked Suggs—"I'm gwine down in *thar*, and I'm gwine to lay this money down *so*"—showing how he would place it on the ground—"and I'm gwine to git on these here knees"—slapping the right one—"and I'm *n-e-v-e-r* gwine to quit the grit ontwell I feel it's got the blessin'! And nobody aint got to be *thar* but me!"

Mr. Bugg greatly admired the Captain's fervent piety, and bidding him God-speed, turned off.

Captain Suggs "struck for" the swamp sure enough, where his horse was already hitched. "Ef them fellers aint done to a cracklin," he muttered to himself as he mounted, "I'll never bet on two pair agin! They're peart at the snap game, theyselves; but they're badly lewed this hitch! Well, Live and let live is a good old motter, and it's my sentiments adzactly!" And giving the spur to his horse, off he cantered.

GEORGE WASHINGTON HARRIS, "SUT LOVINGOOD"

1814 - 1869

He [Harris] brings us closer than any other writer to the indigenous and undiluted resources of the American language. . . . Harris possesses on the comic level something of what Melville does on the tragic, the rare kind of dramatic imagination that can get movement directly into words.

—F. O. MATTHIESSEN, *American Renaissance* (1941), p. xiii.

George W. Harris was born in Allegheny City, now a part of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; but he grew up in Knoxville, Tennessee, where he was taken as a small boy. He was fond of reading but apparently had no great amount of schooling. He tried his hand at many occupations. He worked in a metal-repair shop; he was a postmaster; he was at two separate times captain of a river steamboat; he ran a sawmill; he played a part in Tennessee politics; and he was superintendent of construction for a railroad. His humorous sketches were published in Knoxville and Nashville newspapers and in W. T. Porter's the *Spirit of the Times*. At his best Harris is unsurpassed among Southern humorists. Sut Lovingood is an East Tennessee mountaineer, fond of whisky and practical jokes. He hates hypocrisy, especially in women and circuit riders. See Donald Day, "The Humorous Works of George W. Harris," *American Literature*, XIV, 391-406 (January, 1943); Walter Blair, *Native American Humor* (1937), pp. 62-101; and Franklin J. Meine, *Tall Tales of the Southwest* (1930), pp. xv-xxxii.

SICILY BURNS'S WEDDING from SUT LOVINGOOD'S YARNS (1867)

"HEY GE-ORGE!" rang among the mountain slopes; and looking up to my left, I saw "Sut," tearing along down a steep point, heading

me off, in a long kangaroo lope, holding his flask high above his head, and hat in hand. He brought up near me, banteringly shaking the half-full "tickler," within an inch of my face.

5 "Whar am yu gwine? take a suck, hoss? This yere truck's *ole*. I kotch hit myse'f, hot this mornin frum the still wum. Nara durn'd bit ove

strike-nine in hit—I put that ar piece ove burnt dried peach in myse'f tu gin hit color—better nur ole Bullen's plan. he puts in tan ooze, in what he sells, an' when that haint handy, he uses the red warter outen a pon' jis' below his barn;—makes a pow'ful natral color, but don't help the taste much. Then he correcks that wif red pepper, hits an orful mixtry, that whisky ole Bullen makes, no wonder he seed 'Hell-sarpints.' He's pisent ni ontu three quarters ove the b'levin parts ove his congregashun wif hit, an' tuther quarter he's sot intu ruff stealin an' cussin Ef his still-'ous don't burn down, ur he peg out hisse'f, the neighborhood am ruinated a-pas' salvashun. Haint he the durndes sampil ove a passun yu ever seed enyhow?

"Say George, du yu see these yere well-poles what I uses fur laigs? Yu sez yu sees em, dus yu?"
"Yes."

"Very well; I passed 'em a-pas' each uther tuther day, right peart. I put one out a-head jus' so, an' then tuther 'bout nine feet a-head ove hit agin jis' so, an' then kep on a-duin hit. I'll jis' gin yu leave tu go tu the devil ha'f hamon, ef I didn't make fewer tracks tu the mile, an' more tu the minit, than wer ever made by eny human man body, since Bark Wilson beat the saw-log frum the top ove the Frog Mountin intu the Oconee River, an' dove, an' dodged hit at las'. I hes allers look'd ontu that performince ove Bark's as onekel'd in histery, allers givin way tu dad's ho'net race, however.

"George, every livin thing hes hits pint, a pint ove sum sort. Ole Bullen's pint is a durn'ed fust rate, three bladed, dubbil barril'd, warter-proof, hypocracy, an' a never-tirein appertite fur bal'-face. Sicily Burns's pint am tu drive men folks plum crazy, an' then bring em too agin. Gin em a rale Orleans fever in five minits, an' then in five minits more, gin them a Floridy ager. Durn her, she's down on her heels flat-footed now. Dad's pint is tu be king ove all durn'd fools, ever since the day ove that feller what cribb'd up so much co'n down in Yegipt, long time ago, (he run outen his coat yu minds.) The Bibil tells us hu wer the stronges' man—hu wer the bes' man—hu wer the meekis' man, an' hu the wises' man, but leaves yu tu guess hu wer the bigges' fool.

"Well eny man what cudent guess arter readin that ar scrimmage wif an 'oman 'bout the coat, haint sense enuf tu run intu the hous', ef hit

wer rainin ded cats, that's all. Mam's pint am in kitchen insex, baking hoe-cake, bilin greens, an' runnin bar laiged. My pint am in takin aboard big skeers, an' then beatin enbody's hoss, ur skared dorg, a-runnin frum onder em agin. I used tu think my pint an' dad's wer jis' the same, sulky, unmix'd king durn'd fool, but when he acted hoss, an' mistook hossflies fur ho'nets, I los' heart. Never mine, when I gits his 'sperence, I may be king fool, but yet great golly, he gets frum bad tu wus, monstus fas'.

"Now ef a feller happens tu know what his pint am, he kin allers git along, sumhow, purvided he don't swar away his liberty tu a temprins s'ciety, live tu fur lrum a still-'ous, an' too ni a chu'ch ur a jail. Them's my sentimints on 'pints,'—an' yere's my sentimints ontu folks: Men wer made a-purpus jis' tu eat, drink, an' fur stayin awake in the yearly part ove the nites. an' wimen wer made tu cook the vittils, mix the sperits, an' help the men du the stayin awake That's all, an' nuthin more, onless hits fur the wimen tu raise the devil atwix meals, an' knit socks atwix drams, an' the men tu play short kerds, swap hosses wif fools, an' fite fur exersise, at odd spells.

"George, yu don't onderstan life yet scarcely at all, got a heap tu larn, a heap. But 'bout my swappin my laigs so fas'—these yere very par ove laigs. I hed got about a fox squirril skin full ove biled co'n juice packed onder my shut, an' onder my hide too, I mout es well add, an' wer aimin fur Bill Carr's on foot. When I got in sight ove ole man Burns's, I seed ni ontu fifty hosses an' muels hitch'd tu the fence Durnatshun! I jis' then tho't ove hit, 'twer Sicily's wedding day. She married ole Clapshaw, the suckit-rider. The very feller hu's faith gin out when he met me sendin sody all over creashun. Suckit-riders am surjestif things tu me. They preaches agin me, an' I hes no chance tu preach back at them. Ef I cud I'd make the institushun behave hitsef better nur hit dus. They hes sum wonderful pints, George. Thar am two things nobody never seed: wun am a dead muel, an' tuther is a suckit-rider's grave. Kaze why, the he muels all turn intu old field school-masters, an' the she ones intu strong minded wimen, an' then when thar time cums, they dies sorter like uther folks. An' the suckit-riders ride ontill they marry; ef they marrys money, they turns intu store-keepers, swaps hosses, an' stays away ove colleckshun Sundays. Them what marrys, an' by sum orful mistake

misses the money, jis' turns intu polertishuns, sells 'ile well stock,' an' dies sorter in the human way too.

"But 'bout the wedding, Ole Burns hed a big black an' white bull, wif a ring in his snout, an' the rope tied up roun his ho'ns. They rid 'im tu mill, an' sich like wif a saddil made outen two dorgwood forks, an' two clapboards, kivered wif a ole piece ove carpet, rope girth, an' rope stirrups wif a loop in hit fur the foot. Ole 'Sock,' es they call'd the bull, hed jis' got back from mill, an' wer turn'd into the yard, saddil an' all, tu solace hissef a-pickin grass. I wer slungin roun the outside ove the hous', fur they hedn't hed the manners tu ax me in, when they sot down tu dinner I wer pow'fully hurt 'bout hit, an' happen'd tu think—SODY So I sot in a-watchin fur a chance tu du sumthin. I fus' tho't I'd shave ole Clapshaw's hoss's tail, go tu the stabil an' shave Sicily's mare's tail, an' ketch ole Burns out, an' shave his tail too. While I wer a-studyin 'bout this, ole Sock wer a-nosin 'roun, an' cum up ontu a big baskit what hilt a littil shattered co'n; he dipp'd in his head tu git hit, an' I shipp'd up an' jerked the handil over his ho'ns.

"Now, George, ef yu knows the nater ove a cow brute, they is the durndes' fools amung all the beastes, ('scept the Lovingoods), when they gits intu tribulashun, they knows nuffin but tu shot thar eyes, beller, an' back, an' keep a-backin. Well, when ole Sock raised his head an' foun hissef in darkness, he jis' twisted up his tail, snorted the shatter'd co'n outen the baskit, an' made a tremenjus lunge agin the hous'. I hearn the picters a-hangin agin the wall on the inside a-fallin. He fotch a deep loud rusty beller, mout been hearn a mile, an' then sot intu a ouendin sistem ove backin. A big craw-fish wif a hungry coon a-reachin fur him, wer jus' nowhar. Fust agin one thing, then over anuther, an' at las' agin the bee-bainch, knockin hit an' a dozen stan ove bees heads over heels, an' then stompin back'ards thru the mess. Hit haint much wuf while tu tell what the bees did, ur how soon they sot intu duin hit. They am pow'ful quick-tempered littil critters, enyhow. The air wer dark wif 'em, an' Sock wer kivered all over, frum snout tu tail, so clost yu cudent a-sot down a grain ove wheat fur bees, an' they were a-fitin one another in the air, fur a place on the bull. The hous' stood on sidelin groun, an' the back door wer even wif hit. So Sock happen tu hit hit plum, jis' backed

into the hous' onder 'bout two hundred an' fifty pouns ove steam, bawlin orful, an' every snort he lotch he snorted away a quart ove bees ofen his sweaty snout. He wer the leader ove the bigges' an' the madest army ove bees in the worl'd. Thar wer at leas' five solid bushels ove 'em. They hed filled the baskit, an' hed lodged ontu his tail, ten deep, ontul hit wer es thick es a waggin tung. He hed hit stuck strait up in the air, an' hit looked adzackly like a dead pine kivered wif iver. I think he wer the hottes' and wus hurtin bull then livin, his temper, too, seemed tu be pow-fully flustrated. Ove *all* the durn'd times an' kerryins on yu *ever* hearn tell on wer thar an' thar abouts. He cum tail fust agin the ole two story Dutch clock, an' fotch hit, bustin hits runnin geer outen hit, the littil wheels a-trundlin over the floor, an' the bees even chasin them. Nex pass, he fotch up agin the foot ove a big dubbil ingine bedstead, rarin hit on aind, an' punchin one ove the posts thru a glass winder. The nex tail fus' experdishun wer made aginst the cati-corner'd cupboard, outen which he made a perfeck momox. Fus' he upshot hit, smashin in the glass doors, an' then jis sot in an' stomp'd everything on the shelves intu giblits, a-tryin tu back funder in that direckshun, an' tu git the bees ofen his laigs.

"Pickil crocks, preserves jars, vinegar jugs, seed bags, yarb bunches, paragorick bottils, aig baskits, an' delf war—all mix'd dam permiskusly, an' not worth the sortin, by a duller an' a 'alf. Nex he got a far back acrost the room agin the board pertushun; he went thru hit like hit hed been paper, takin wif him 'bout six foot squar ove hit in splinters, an' broken boards, intu the nex room, whar they wer eatin dinner, an' rite yere the fitin becum ginerall, an' the daucin, squawkin, cussin, an' dodgin begun.

"Clapshaw's ole mam wer es deaf es a dogiron, an sot at the aind ove the tabil, nex tu whar ole Sock busted thru the wall; tail fus' he cum agin her cheer, ahistin her an' hit ontu the tabil. Now, the smashin ove delf, an' the mixin ove vittils begun. They hed sot severil tabils together tu make hit long enuf. So he jis' rolled 'em up a-top ove one anuther, an' thar sot ole Missis Clapshaw, a-straddil ove the top ove the pile, a-fitin bees like a mad wind-mill, wif her calliker cap in one han, fur a wepun, an' a cract frame in tuther, an' a-kickin, an' a-spurrin like she wer ridin a lazy hoss arter the doctor,

an' a-screamin rape, fire, an' murder, es fas' es she cud name 'em over.

"Taters, cabbage, meat, soup, beans, sop, dump-
lins, an' the truck what yu wallers 'em in, milk,
plates, pies, puddins, an' every durn fixin yu cud
think ove in a week, wer thar, mix'd an' mashed,
like hit had been thru a thrashin-meesheen.
Ole Sock still kep a-backin, an' backed the hole
pile, ole 'oman an' all, also sum cheers, outen
the frunt door, an' down seven steps intu the
lane, an' then by golly, turn'd a fifteen hundred
poun summerset hissef arter em, lit a-top ove
the mix'd up mess, flat ove his back, an' then
kicked hissef ontu his feet agin. About the time
he ris, ole man Burns—yu know how fat, an'
stumpy, an' cross-grained he is, enyhow—made a
vigrus mad snatch at the baskit, an' got a savin
holt ontu hit, but cudent *let go quick enuf*; fur
ole Sock jis' snorted, bawled, an' histed the ole
cuss heels fust up intu the air, an' he lit on the
bull's back, an' hed the baskit in his han.

"Jis' es soon es ole Blackey got the use ove
his eyes, he tore off down the lane tu out-run the
bees, so durn'd fas' that ole Burns wer feard tu
try tu git off. So he jus' socked his feet intu the
rope loops, an' then cummenc'd the durndes'
bull-ride ever mortal man ondertuck. Sock run
atwix the hitched critters an' the railfence, ole
Burns fust fitin him over the head wif the baskit
tu stop him, an' then fitin the bees wif hit. I'll
jis' be durn'd ef I didn't think he hed four ur
five baskits, hit wer in so meny places at onst.
Well, Burns, baskit, an' bull, an' bees, skared
every durn'd hoss an' muel loose frum that fence
—bees ontu all ove 'em, bees, by golly, everywhar.
Mos' on 'em, too, tuck a fence rail along, fas'
tu the bridil reins. Now I'll jis gin yu leave tu
kiss my sister Sall till she squalls, ef ever sich a
sight wer seed ur sich noises hearn, es filled up
that long lane. A heavy cloud ove dus', like a
harycane hed been blowin, hid all the hosses,
an' away abuv hit yu cud see tails, an' ainds ove
fence-rails a-flyin about; now an' then a par ove
bright hine shoes wud flash in the sun like two
sparks, an' away ahead wer the baskit a-sirklin
roun an' about at randum. Brayin, nickerin, the
bellerin ove the bull, clatterin ove runnin hoofs,
an' a mons'ous rushin soun, made up the noise.
Lively times in that lane jus' then, warn't thar?

"I swar ole Burns kin beat eny man on top ove
the yeath a-fitin bees wif a baskit. Jis' set 'im
a-straddil ove a mad bull, an' let thar be bees

enuf tu exhite the ole man, an' the man what
beats him kin break me. Hosses an' muels wer
tuck up all over the county, an' sum wer forever
los'. Yu cudent go eny course, in a cirkil ove a
mile, an' not find buckils, stirrups, straps, saddil
blankits, ur sumthin belongin tu a saddil hoss.
Now don't forgit that about that hous' thar wer
a good time bein had ginerally Fellers an' gals
loped outen windows, they rolled outen the
doors in bunches, they clomb the chimleys, they
darted onder the house jis' tu dart out agin, they
tuck tu the thicket, they rolled in the wheat field,
lay down in the krick, did everything but stan
still. Sum made a strait run *fur* home, an' sum es
strait a run *frum* home; livelyest folks I ever did
see. Clapshaw crawled onder a straw pile in the
barn, an' sot intu prayin—yu cud a-hearn him a
mile—sumthin 'bout the plagues ove Yegipt, an'
the pains ove the secon death. I tell yu now he
lumbered.

"Sicily, she squatted in the cold spring, up tu
her years, an' turn'd a milk crock over her head,
while she wer a drownin a mess ove bees onder
her coats. I went tu her, an' sez I, 'Yu hes got
anuther new sensashun haint yu?' Sez she—

" 'Shet yer mouth, yu cussed fool!'

"Sez I, 'Power'ful sarchin feelin bees gins a
body, don't they?'

" 'Oh, lordy, lordy, Sut, these yere 'bominabil
inex is jis' burnin me up!'

" 'Gin 'em a mess ove SODY,' sez I, 'that'll cool
'em off, an' 'skeer the las' durn'd one ofen the
place.'

"She lifted the crock, so she cud flash her eyes
at me, an' sed, 'Yu go tu hell!' *jis es plain*. I
thought, takin all things tugether, that p'raps I
mout es well put the mountin atwix me an' that
plantashun; an' I did hit.

"Thar warnt an' 'oman, ur a gal at that
weddin, but what thar frocks, an' stockins wer too
tite fur a week. Bees am wus on wimin than men,
enyhow. They hev a farer chance at 'em. Nex
day I passed ole Hawley's, an' his gal Betts wer
sittin in the porch, wif a white hankerchef tied
roun her jaws; her face wer es red es a beet, an'
her eyebrows hung 'way over heavy. Sez I, 'Hed
a fine time at the weddin, didn't yu?' 'Yu mus'
be a durn'd fool,' wer every word she sed. I
hadent gone a hundred yards, ontill I met Missis
Brady, her hans fat, an' her ankils swelled ontill
they shined. Sez she,—

" 'Whar yu gwine, Sut?'

1801-1864----- CAROLINE MATILDA KIRKLAND

"Bee huntin,' sez I.

"Yu jis' say bees agin, yu infunel gallinipper, an' I'll scab yer head wif a rock.'

"Now haunt hit strange how tetchus they am, on the subjick ove bees?

"Ove all the durn'd misfortinit weddins ever since ole Adam married that heifer, what wer so fon' ove talkin tu snaix, an' eatin appils, down ontill now, that one ove Sicily's an' Clapshaw's wer the worst one fur noise, disappointment, skeer, breakin things, hurtin, trubblil, vexashun ove spirrit, an' ginerall swellin. Why, George, her an' him cudent sleep together fur ni ontu a week, on account ove the doins ove them ar hot-footed, 'vengeful 'bominabil littil insex. They never will gee together, got tu bad a start, mine what I tell yu. Yu haunt time now tu hear how ole Burns finished his bull-ride, an' how I cum tu du that

lofty, topliftical speciment ove fas' runnin. I'll tell yu all that, sum uther time Ef eny ove 'em axes after me, tell 'em that I'm over in Fannin, on my way tu Dahlonga. They is huntin me tu kill me, I is fear'd.

"Hit am an orful thing, George, tu be a natral born durn'd fool. Yu'se never 'sperienced hit pussonally, hev yu? Hits made pow'fully agin our famerly, an all owin tu dad I orter bust my head open agin a bluff ove rocks, an' jis' wud du hit. ef I warnt a cussed coward. All my yeathly 'pendence is in these yere laigs—d'ye see 'em? Ef they don't fail, I may turn human sum day, that is sorter human, enuf tu be a Squire or school cummisiner Ef I wer jis' es smart es I am mean, an' ornary, I'd be President ove a Wild Cat Bank in less nor a week. Is sperrits plenty over wif yu?"

CAROLINE MATILDA KIRKLAND

1801 - 1864

For what do we live, but to make sport for our neighbours, and laugh at them in our turn?

—JANE AUSTEN, *Pride and Prejudice*, chap. 57.

Mrs. Kirkland (née Stansbury) was the granddaughter of Joseph Stansbury, a Tory poet of the Revolutionary period. She was the mother of Joseph Kirkland, the author of *Zury* (1887), a realistic novel of Illinois life. Mrs. Kirkland's father was a bookseller, and she was born in New York City. After her father's death she and her mother moved to Geneva in the western part of the same state, and there she married William Kirkland. Together they conducted private schools in Geneva and Detroit. During the boom times ended by the panic of 1837 they settled in the semi-frontier village of Pinkney, which is some sixty miles north and west of Detroit. In 1839 she published in New York under the pseudonym "Mary Clavers" *A New*

Home—Who'll Follow? or, Glimpses of Western Life. The popularity of these sketches, which were confessedly modeled on Mary Russell Mitford's *Our Village*, prompted her to publish *Forest Life* (1842) and *Western Clearings* (1845). Meanwhile she had moved back to New York City in 1843. After the death of her husband in 1846 she gave more time to writing and edited for several years *Sartain's Union Magazine*, which published some of Poe's later poems and stories. Her later writings, however, lack the freshness and vigor of *A New Home* and *Forest Life*.

A New Home, it should be remembered, was written for Eastern readers, and it represents the attitude of an Easterner somewhat disillusioned by what life on the border had proved to be. Mrs. Kirkland was struck by the lack of the conveniences and comforts to which well-bred women were accustomed, by the equalitarian spirit of the inhabitants, by their dislike of anything resembling condescension, their incessant borrowing, their reluctance to admire anything not in common use, and their spirit of neighborliness. The sketches have "the merit of general truth of outline" which the author claimed for them, but a vein of satire runs through them as it runs through the writings of most of the humorists of the period. The portrait of Mrs. Campaspe Nippers, a Yankee from Maine, is not of course to be taken as a picture of a typical Michigan woman. The background, however, is faithful to Mrs. Kirkland's original.

For Mrs. Kirkland's life and works, see Dorothy A. Dondore's sketch in *D. A. B.*; Edgar Allan Poe's essay in *The Literati*; and Edna M. Twamly, "The Western Sketches of Caroline Matilda [Stansbury] Kirkland," *Michigan Historical Collections*, XXXIX, 89-124 (1915).

from A NEW HOME—WHO'LL
FOLLOW? (1839)

Chapter XXXIV

[Mrs. Campaspe Nippers]

There is a cunning which we in England call "the turning of the cat in the pan"; which is, when that which a man says to another, he lays it as if another had said it to him.

BACON.

My near neighbor, Mrs. Nippers, whose garden joins ours, and whose "keepin room," I regret to say it, looks into my kitchen, was most cruelly mortified that she was not elected President of the Montacute Female Beneficent Society. It would have been an office so congenial to her character, condition, and habits! 'Twas cruel to give it to Mrs. Skinner, "merely," as Mrs. Nippers declares, "because the society wanted to get remnants from the store!"

Mrs. Campaspe Nippers is a widow lady of

some thirty-five, or thereabouts, who lives with her niece alone in a small house, in the midst of a small garden, in the heart of the village. I have never noticed anything peculiar in the construction of the house. There are not, that I can discover, any contrivances resembling ears; or those ingenious funnels of sail cloth which are employed on board ship to coax fresh air down between-decks. Nor are there large mirrors, nor a telescope, within doors, nor yet a *camera obscura*. I have never yet detected any telegraphic signals from without. Yet no man sneezes at opening his front door in the morning; no woman sweeps her steps after breakfast; no child goes late to school; no damsel slips into the store; no bottle out of it, no family has fried onions for dinner; no hen lays an egg in the afternoon; no horse slips his bridle; no cow is missing at milking-time, and no young couple after tea; but Mrs. Nippers, and her niece, Miss Artemisia Clinch, know all about it, and tell it to everybody who will listen to them.

A sad rumor was raised last winter, by some spiteful gossip, against a poor woman who had taken lodgers to gain bread for her family, and when Mrs. Nippers found it rather difficult to gain credence for her view of the story, she nailed the matter, as she supposed, by whispering with mysterious meaning, while her large light eyes dilated with energy and enjoyment—"I have myself seen a light there after eleven o'clock at night!"

In vain did the poor woman's poor husband, a man who worked hard, but would make a beast of himself at times, protest that malice itself might let his wife escape; and dare any *man* to come forward and say aught against her. Mrs. Nippers only smiled, and stretched her eye-lids so far apart, that the sky-blue whites of her light-grey eyes were visible both above and below the scarce distinguishable iris, and she looked at Miss Artemisia Clinch with such triumphant certainty; observing, that a drunkard's word was not worth much. It is impossible ever to convince her, in any body's favor.

But this is mere wandering. Association led me from my intent, which was only to speak of Mrs. Nippers as connected with the Montacute Female Beneficent Society. This Association is the prime dissipation of our village, the magic circle within which lies all our cherished exclusiveness, the stronghold of *caste*, the test of gentility, the temple of emulation, the hive of industry, the mart of fashion, and I must add, though reluctantly, the fountain of village scandal, the hot-bed from which springs every root of bitterness among the petticoated denizens of Montacute. I trust the importance of the Society will be enhanced in the reader's estimation, by the variety of figures I have been compelled to use in describing it. Perhaps it would have been enough to have said it is a Ladies' Sewing Society, and so saved all this wordiness; but I like to amplify.

When the idea was first started, by I know not what fortunate individual,—Mrs. Nippers does, I dare say,—this same widow-lady espoused the thing warmly, donned her India-rubbers, and went all over through the sticky mud, breakfasted with me, dined with Mrs. Rivers, took tea with Mrs. Skinner, and spent the intervals and the evening with half-a-dozen other people, not only to recommend the plan, but to give her opinion how the affair ought to be conducted, to what benevolent uses applied, and under what laws and by-laws; and though last, far from least,

who ought to be its *officers*. Five Directresses did she select, two Secretaries, and a Treasurer, Managers and Auditors,—like the military play of my three brothers, who always had "fore-captain," "hind-captain," and "middle-captain," but no privates. But in all this Mrs. Campaspe never once hinted the name of a Lady President. She said, to be sure, that she should be very glad to be of any sort of service to the Society; and that from her position she should be more at leisure to devote time to its business, than almost any other person; and that both herself and her niece had been concerned in a sewing society in a certain village at "the East," whose doings were often quoted by both ladies, and concluded by inquiring who her hearer thought would be the most suitable president.

In spite of all this industrious canvassing, when the meeting for forming the society took place at Mrs. Skinner's, Mrs. Campaspe Nippers's name was perversely omitted in the animated ballot for dignities. No one said a word, but every one had a sort of undefined dread of so active a member, and, by tacit consent, every office which she had herself contrived, was filled, without calling upon her. Her eyes grew preternaturally pale, and her lips wan as whit-leather, when the result was known; but she did not trust herself to speak. She placed her name on the list of members with as much composure as could be looked for, under such trying circumstances, and soon after departed with Miss Artemisia Clinch, giving a parting glance which seemed to say, with Sir Peter Teazle, "I leave my character behind me."

A pawkie smile dawned on two or three of the sober visages of our village dames, as the all-knowing widow and her submissive niece closed the door, but no one ventured a remark on the killing frost which had fallen upon Mrs. Nippers's anticipated "budding honors," and, after agreeing upon a meeting at our house, the ladies dispersed.

The next morning, as I drew my window curtain, to see whether the sun had aired the world enough to make it safe for me to get up to breakfast,—I do not often dispute the *pas* with Aurora,—I saw Mrs. Nippers emerge from the little front door of her tiny mansion, unattended by her niece, for a marvel, and pace majestically down Main street.

I watched her in something of her own prying spirit, to see whither she could be going so early; but she disappeared in the woods, and I turned

to my combs and brushes, and thought no more of the matter.

But the next day, and the next, and the day after, almost as early each morning, out trotted my busy neighbor; and although she disappeared in different directions—sometimes P. S. and sometimes O. P.—she never returned till late in the afternoon. My curiosity began to be troublesome.

At length came the much-desired Tuesday, whose destined event was the first meeting of the society. I had made preparations for such plain and simple cheer as is usual at such feminine gatherings, and began to think of arranging my dress with the decorum required by the occasion, when, about one hour before the appointed time, came Mrs. Nippers and Miss Clinch, and ere they were unshawled and unhooded, Mrs. Flyter and her three children—the eldest four years, and the youngest six months. Then Mrs. Muggles and her crimson baby, four weeks old. Close on her heels, Mrs. Briggs and her little boy of about three years' standing, in a long tailed coat, with vest and decencies of scarlet circassian. And there I stood in my gingham wrapper and kitchen apron; much to my discomfiture and the undisguised surprise of the Female Beneficent Society.

"I always calculate to be ready to begin at the time appointed," remarked the gristle-lipped widow.

"So do I," responded Mrs. Flyter and Mrs. Muggles, both of whom sat the whole afternoon with baby on knee, and did not sew a stitch.

"What! isn't there any work ready?" continued Mrs. Nippers, with an astonished aspect; "well, I *did* suppose that such smart officers as *we* have would have prepared all beforehand. We always used to, at the East."

Mrs. Skinner, who is really quite a pattern-woman in all that makes woman indispensable, viz., cookery and sewing, took up the matter quite warmly, just as I slipped away in disgrace to make the requisite reform in my costume.

When I returned, the work was distributed, and the company broken up into little knots or coteries; every head bowed, and every tongue in full play. I took my seat at as great a distance from the sharp widow as might be,—though it is vain to think of eluding a person of her ubiquity, —and reconnoitred the company who were "done off" (indigenous,) "in first-rate style," for this important occasion. There were nineteen women with thirteen babies—or at least "young 'uns," (indigenous,) who were not above gingerbread.

Of these thirteen, nine held large chunks of gingerbread, or dough-nuts, in trust, for the benefit of the gowns of the society; the remaining four were supplied with bunches of maple sugar, tied in bits of rag, and pinned to their shoulders, or held dripping in the fingers of their mammas.

Mrs. Flyter was "slicked up" for the occasion, in the snuff-colored silk she was married in, curiously enlarged in the back and not as voluminous in the floating part as is the wasteful custom of the present day. Her three immense children, white-haired and blubber-lipped like their amiable parent, were in pink gingham and blue glass beads. Mrs. Nippers wore her unfailing brown merino, and black apron; Miss Clinch her inevitable scarlet calico; Mrs. Skinner her red merino with baby of the same; Mrs. Daker shone out in her very choicest city finery, (where else could she show it, poor thing?) and a dozen other Mistresses shone in their "'tother gowns," and their tamboured collars. Mrs. Doubleday's pretty black-eyed dolly was neatly stowed in a small willow basket, where it lay looking about with eyes full of sweet wonder, behaving itself with marvellous quietness and discretion, as did most of the other little torments, to do them justice.

Much consultation, deep and solemn, was held as to the most profitable kinds of work to be undertaken by the society. Many were in favor of making up linen, cotton linen of course, but Mrs. Nippers assured the company that shirts never used to sell well at the East, and therefore she was perfectly certain that they would not do here. Pincushions and such like feminilities were then proposed; but at these Mrs. Nippers held up both hands, and showed a double share of blue-white around her eyes. Nobody about here needed pincushions, and besides where should we get materials? Aprons, capes, caps, collars, were all proposed with the same ill success. At length Mrs. Doubleday, with an air of great deference, inquired what Mrs. Nippers would recommend.

The good lady hesitated a little at this. It was more her forte to object to other people's plans, than to suggest better; but, after a moment's consideration, she said she should think fancy-boxes, watch-cases, and alum-baskets would be very pretty.

A dead silence fell on the assembly, but of course it did not last long. Mrs. Skinner went on quietly cutting out shirts, and in a very short time furnished each member with a good supply

of work, stating that any lady might take work home to finish if she liked.

Mrs. Nippers took her work and edged herself into a coterie of which Mrs. Flyter had seemed till then the magnet. Very soon I heard, "I declare it's a shame!" "I don't know what'll be done about it!" "She told me so with her own mouth!" "O, but I was there myself!" etc., etc., in many different voices; the interstices well filled with undistinguishable whispers "not loud but deep."

It was not long before the active widow transferred her seat to another corner; Miss Clinch plying her tongue, not her needle, in a third. The whispers and the exclamations seemed to be gaining ground. The few silent members were inquiring for more work.

"Mrs. Nippers has the sleeve! Mrs. Nippers, have you finished that sleeve?"

Mrs. Nippers colored, said "No," and sewed four stitches. At length the "storm grew loud apace." "It will break up the society—"

"What is that?" asked Mrs. Doubleday, in her sharp treble. "What is it, Mrs. Nippers? You know all about it."

Mrs. Nippers replied that she only knew what she had heard, etc., etc., but, after a little urging, consented to inform the company in general, that there was great dissatisfaction in the neighborhood; that those who lived in *log-houses* at a little distance from the village, had not been invited to join the society; and also that many people thought twenty-five cents quite too high for a yearly subscription.

Many looked aghast at this. Public opinion is nowhere so strongly felt as in this country, among new settlers. And, as many of the present company still lived in *log-houses*, a tender string was touched.

At length, an old lady, who had sat quietly in a corner all the afternoon, looked up from behind the great woollen sock she was knitting—

"Well, now! that's queer!" said she, addressing Mrs. Nippers with an air of simplicity simplified. "Miss¹ Turner told me you went round the neighborhood last Friday, and told that Miss Clavers and Miss Skinner despised every body that lived in *log-houses*; and you know you told Miss Briggs that you thought twenty-five cents was too much; didn't she, Miss Briggs?" Mrs. Briggs nodded.

The widow blushed to the very centre of her

pale eyes, but "e'en though vanquished," she lost not her assurance. "Why, I'm sure I only said that we only paid twelve-and-a-half cents at the East; and as to *log-houses*, I don't know, I can't just recollect, but I didn't say more than others did."

But human nature could not bear up against the mortification; and it had, after all, the scarce credible effect of making Mrs. Nippers sew in silence for some time, and carry her colors at half-mast for the remainder of the afternoon.

At tea each lady took one or more of her babies into her lap and much grabbing ensued. Those who wore calicoes seemed in good spirits and appetite, for green tea at least, but those who had unwarily sported silks and other unwashables, looked acid and uncomfortable. Cake flew about at a great rate, and the milk and water, which ought to have gone quietly down sundry juvenile throats, was spirted without mercy into various wry faces. But we got through. The astringent refreshment produced its usual crisping effect upon the vivacity of the company. Talk ran high upon almost all Montacutian themes.

"Do you have any butter now?" "When are you going to raise your barn?" "Is your man a going to kill this week?" "I ha'n't seen a bit of meat these six weeks." "Was you to meetin' last Sabbath?" "Has Miss White got any wool to sell?" "Do tell if you've been to Detroit!" "Are you out of candles?" "Well, I *should* think Sarah Teals wanted a new gown!" "I hope we shall have milk in a week or two," and so on; for, be it known, that, in a state of society like ours, the bare necessities of life are subjects of sufficient interest for a good deal of conversation. More than one truly respectable woman of our neighborhood has told me, that it is not very many years since a moderate allowance of Indian meal and potatoes was literally all that fell to their share of this rich world for weeks together.

"Is your daughter Isabella well?" asked Mrs. Nippers of me solemnly, pointing to little Bell who sat munching her bread and butter, half asleep, at the fragmentious table.

"Yes, I believe so, look at her cheeks."

"Ah yes! it was her cheeks I was looking at. They are so *very* rosy. I have a little niece who is the very image of her. I never see Isabella without thinking of Jerushy; and Jerushy is most dreadfully scrofulous!"

Satisfied at having made me uncomfortable, Mrs. Nippers turned to Mrs. Doubleday, who was

¹ Mrs.

trotting her pretty babe with her usual proud fondness.

"Don't you think your baby breathes rather strangely?" said the tormentor.

"Breathes! how!" said the poor thing, off her guard in an instant.

"Why, rather croupish, I think, if *I* am any judge. I have never had any children of my own to be sure, but I was with Mrs. Green's baby when it died, and—"

"Come, we'll be off!" said Mr. Doubleday, who had come for his spouse. "Don't mind the envious vixen"—aside to his Polly.

Just then, somebody on the opposite side of the room happened to say, speaking of some cloth affair, "Mrs. Nippers says it ought to be sponged."

"Well, sponge it then, by all means," said Mr. Doubleday, "nobody else knows half as much about sponging"; and, with wife and baby in tow, off walked the laughing Philo, leaving the widow absolutely transfixed.

"What *could* Mr. Doubleday mean by that?" was at length her indignant exclamation.

Nobody spoke.

"I am sure," continued the crest-fallen Mrs. Campaspe, with an attempt at a scornful giggle, "I am sure if any body understood him, I would be glad to know what he *did* mean."

"Well now, I can tell you," said the same simple old lady in the corner, who had let out the secret of Mrs. Nippers's morning walks. "Some folks call that *sponging* when you go about getting your dinner here and your tea there, and sich like; as you know you and Meesy there does. That was what he meant, I guess." And the old lady quietly put up her knitting, and prepared to go home.

There have been times when I have thought that almost any degree of courtly duplicity would be preferable to the *brusquerie* of some of my neighbors. but on this occasion I gave all due credit to a simple and downright way of stating the plain truth. The scrofulous hint probably brightened my mental and moral vision somewhat.

Mrs. Nippers's claret cloak and green bonnet, and Miss Clinch's ditto ditto, were in earnest requisition, and I do not think either of them spent a day out that week.

CHARLES FARRAR BROWNE, "ARTEMUS WARD"

1834 - 1867

"Cum the moral on 'em strong."

Browne, the best of the American humorists except Mark Twain, was born in Maine the year after Seba Smith of the same state published in book form *The Life and Writings of Major Jack Downing*. When Browne was fourteen, his father died; and he began work in a

printing office. He was soon writing as well as setting type. After working on several New England newspapers, he went to the Middle West. In 1858 he published the first letter from Artemus Ward, the genial showman who figures in most of his humorous writings. In 1861 and 1862 he was in New York, mingling with the Bohemians—including Walt Whitman and Fitz-James O'Brien—who frequented Pfaff's restaurant. In the meantime he had begun to lecture with great success. In Nevada he met Mark Twain, whom he asked to write "The Jumping Frog of Calaveras." In 1866 he went to England, where his lectures were a great success and where his books are still read. He died of tuberculosis at Southampton in 1867 at the age of thirty-three.

Browne's leading character, unlike those of most other humorists, is not a local but a national type. There is a good deal of satire in his work, but seldom does he ridicule anything that is dear to the average man. The following selections are taken from *Artemus Ward: His Book* (1862). His collected works were published in New York and London in 1875. The best account of Browne's life and work is Don Seitz, *Artemus Ward* (1919). See also Albert Jay Nock's Preface to *Selected Works of Artemus Ward* (1924); Walter Blair, *Native American Humor* (1937); and Jennette Tandy, *Crucible Philosophers in American Humor and Satire* (1925), pp. 132-146.

ONE OF MR. WARD'S BUSINESS LETTERS

(1862)

To the Editor of the ———.

SIR—I'm movin along—slowly along—down
tords your place. I want you should rite me a
letter, sayin how is the show bizniss in your place.
My show at present consists of three moral Bares,
a Kangaroo (a amoozin little Raskal—t'would
make you larf yerself to deeth to see the little cuss
jump up and squeal) wax figgers of G. Washing-
ton Gen. Tayler John Bunyan Capt. Kidd and
Dr. Webster in the act of killin Dr. Parkman,
besides several miscellanyus moral wax statoots
of celebrated piruts & murderers, &c., ekalled by
few & exceld by none. Now Mr. Editor, scratch
orf a few lines sayin how is the show bizniss down
to your place. I shall hav my hanbills dun at
your offiss. Depend upon it. I want you should
git my hanbills up in flamin stile. Also git up a
tremenjus excitement in yr. paper 'bowt my
onparaleld Show. We must fetch the public sum-
how. We must wurk on their feelins. Cum the
moral on 'em strong. If it's a temprance com-
munity tell 'em I sined the pledge fifteen minits
arter Ise born, but on the contery of your people

take their tods, say Mister Ward is as Jenial a
feller as we ever met, full of conviviality. & the
life an sole of the Soshul Bored. Take, don't you?
If you say anythin abowt my show say my snaiks
is as harmliiss as the new born Babe. What a
interestin study it is to see a zewological animil
like a snaik under perfect subjecshun! My kan-
garoo is the most larfable little cuss I ever saw.
All for 15 cents. I am anxysus to skewer your
infloounce. I repeet in regard to them hanbills
that I shall git 'em struck orf up to your printin
office. My perlitercal sentiments agree with yourn
exackly. I know thay do, becawz I never saw a
man whoos didn't.

Respectively yures,

A. WARD.

P.S.—You scratch my back & Ile scratch your
back.

INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT LINCOLN

(1862)

I have no politics. Nary a one. I'm not in the
bizniss. If I was I spose I should holler versiffusly
in the streets at nite and go home to Betsy Jane

smellen of coal ile and gin, in the mornin. I should go to the Poles arly. I should stay there all day. I should see to it that my nabers was thar. I should git carriges to take the kripples, the infirm and the indignant thar. I should be on guard agin frauds, and sich. I should be on the look out for the infamus lise of the enemy, got up jest be4 elecshun for perlitical effeck. When all was over and my candydate was elected, I should move heving & arth—so to speak—until I got orfice, which if I didn't git a orfice I should turn round and abooze the Administration with all my mite and maine. But I'm not in the bizniss. I'm in a far more respectful bizniss nor what pollertics is. I wouldn't give two cents to be a Congresser. The wuss insult I ever received was when sertin citizens of Baldinsville axed me to run fur the Legislater. Sez I, "My frends, dostest think I'd stoop to that there?" They turned as white as a sheet. I spoke in my most orfullest tones, & they knowd I wasn't to be trifled with. They slunked out of site to onct.

There4, havin no politics, I made bold to visit Old Abe at his humstid in Springfield. I found the old feller in his parler, surrounded by a perfeck swarm of orfice seekers. Knowin he had been captin of a flat boat on the roarin Mississippi I thought I'd address him in sailor lingo, so sez I "Old Abe, ahoy! Let out yer main-suls, reef hum the forecastle & throw yer jib-poop overboard! Shiver my timbers, my harty!" (N.B. This is gnuine mariner langwidge, I know, becawz I've seen sailor plays acted out by them New York theater fellers.) Old Abe lookt up quite cross & sez, "Send in yer petition by & by. I can't possibly look at it now. Indeed I can't. It's onpossible, sir!"

"Mr. Linkin, who do you spect I air!" sed I.

"A orfice-seeker, to be sure!" sed he.

"Wall, sir," sed I, "you's never more mistaken in your life. You haint gut a orfiss I'd take under no circumstances. I'm A. Ward. Wax figgers is my perfeshun. I'm the father of Twins, and they look like me—*both of them*. I cum to pay a frendly visit to the President elect of the United States. If so be you wants to see me, say so—if not, say so, & I'm orf like a jug handle."

"Mr. Ward, sit down. I am glad to see you, Sir."

"Repose in Abraham's Buzzum!" said one of the orfice seekers, his idee to begin to git orf a goak at my expense.

"Wall," sez I, "ef all you fellers repose in that there Buzzum thare'll be mity poor nussin for sum of you!" whereupon Old Abe buttoned his weskit clear up and blusht like a maidin of sweet 16. Jest at this pint of the conversation another swarm of orfice-seekers arrove & cum pilin into the parler. Sum wanted post orfices, sum wanted collectorships, sum wantid furrin missions, and all wanted sumthin. I thought Old Abe would go crazy. He hadn't more than had time to shake hands with 'em, before another tremenjis crowd cum porein onto his premises. His house and dooryard was now perfectly overflowed with orfice seekers, all clameruss for a immejit interview with Old Abe. One man from Ohio, who had about seven inches of corn whisky into him, mistook me for Old Abe and addrest me as "The Pra-hayrie Flower of the West." Thinks I *you* want a offiss putty bad. Another man with a gold heded cane and a red nose told Old Abe he was "a seckind Washington & the Pride of the Boundliss West."

Sez I, "Square, you wouldn't take a small post-offis if you could get it, would you?"

Sez he, "A patrit is abuv them things, sir!"

"There's a putty big crop of patrits this season, ain't there, Square?" sez I, when *another* crowd of offiss seekers pored in. The house, dooryard, barn & woodshed was now all full, and when *another* crowd cum I told 'em not to go away for want of room as the hog-pen was still empty. One patrit from a small town in Michygan went up on top the house, got into the chimney and slid down into the parler where Old Abe was endeverin to keep the hungry pack of orfice-seekers from chawin him up alive without benefit of clergy. The minit he reached the fire-place he jumpt up, brusht the soot out of his eyes, and yelled: "Don't make eny pintment at the Spunkville postoffiss till you've read my papers. All the respectful men in our town is signers to that there dockymment!"

"Good God!" cride Old Abe, "they cum upon me from the skize—down the chimneys, and from the bowels of the yearth!" He hadn't more 'n got them words out of his delikit mouth before two fat offiss-seekers from Wisconsin, in endeverin to crawl atween his legs for the purpuss of applyin for the tollgateship at Milwauky, upsopt the President elect & he would hev gone sprawlin into the fireplace if I hadn't caught him in these arms. But I hadn't more'n stood him up strate before

another man cum crashin down the chimney, his head strikin me vilently agin the inards and prostratin my voluptuous form onto the floor. "Mr. Linkin," shoutid the infatootated being, "my papers is signed by every clergyman in our town, and likewise the skool-master!"

Sed I, "You egrejis ass," gettin up & brushin the dust from my eyes, "I'll sign your papers with this bunch of bones, if you don't be a little more keerful how you make my bread basket a depot in the futer. How do you like that air perfumery?" sez I, shuvung my fist under his nose. "Them's the kind of papers I'll giv you! Them's the papers *you* want!"

"But I workt hard for the ticket; I toiled night and day! The patrit should be rewarded!"

"Virtoo," sed I, holdin' the infatootated man by the coat-collar, "virtoo, sir, is its own reward. Look at me!" He did look at me, and qualed beq my gase. "The fact is," I continued, lookin' round on the hungry crowd, "there is scacely a offiss for every ile lamp carrid round durin' this campane. I wish thare was. I wish thare was furrin missions to be filled on varis lonely Islands where eppydemics rage incessantly, and if I was in Old Abe's place I'd send every mother's son of you to them. What air you here for?" I continnered, warmin up considerable, "cant you give Abe a minit's peace? Don't you see he's worrid most to death! Go home, you miserable men, go home & till the sile! Go to peddlin tinware—go to choppin' wood—go to bilin' sope—stuff sassengers—black boots—git a clerkship on sum respectable manure cart—go round as original Swiss Bell Ringers—becum 'origenal and only' Campbell Minstreles—go to lecturin at 50 dollars a nite—imbark in the peanut bizniss—*write for the Ledger*—saw off your legs and go round givin' concerts, with techin appeals to a charitable public, printed on your handbills—anything for a honest livin, but don't come round here drivin Old Abe crazy by your outrajis cuttings up! Go home. 'Stand not upon the order of your goin,' but go to onct! If in five minits from this time," sez I, pullin out my new sixteen

dollar huntin cased watch, and brandishin' it before their eyes, "Ef in five minits from this time a single sole of you remains on these here premises, I'll go out to my cage near by, and let my Boy Constructor loose! & ef he gits among you, you'll think old Solferino has cum again and no mistake!" You ought to hev seen them scamper, Mr. Fair. They run orf as though Satun hisself was arter them with a red hot ten pronged pitchfork. In five minits the premises was clear.

"How kin I ever repay you, Mr. Ward, for your kindness?" sed Old Abe, advancin and shakin me warmly by the hand. "How kin I ever repay you, sir?"

"By givin the whole country a good, sound administration. By poerin' ile upon the troubled watur, North and South. By pursoooin a patriotic, firm, and just course, and then if any State wants to secede, let 'em Scseshl!"

"How 'bout my Cabinit, Mister Ward?" sed Abe.

"Fill it up with Showmen, sir! Showmen is devoid of politics. They hain't got any principles! They know how to cater for the public. They know what the public wants, North & South. Showmen, sir, is honest men. Ef you doubt their literary ability, look at their posters, and see small bills! Ef you want a Cabinit as is a Cabinit fill it up with showmen, but don't call on me. The moral wax figger perfeshun mustn't be permitted to go down while there's a drop of blood in these vains! A. Linkin, I wish you well! Ef Powers or Walcutt wus to pick out a model for a beautiful man, I scarcely think they'd sculp you; but ef you do the fair thing by your country you'll make as putty a angel as any of us! A. Linkin, use the talents which Nature has put into you judishusly and firmly, and all will be well! A Linkin, adool!"

He shook me cordyully by the hand—we exchanged picters, so we could gaze upon each others' liniments when far away from one another—he at the hellum of the ship of State and I at the hellum of the show bizniss—admittance only 15 cents.

CHARLES HENRY SMITH, ‘‘BILL ARP’’

1826 - 1903

The Georgia humorist was a lawyer, the son of a Massachusetts father and a South Carolina mother. He was educated at Franklin College, now the University of Georgia. The first of the ‘‘Bill Arp’’ letters—addressed to Abe Linkhorn—appeared in the *Rome, Georgia, Confederacy* in the spring of 1861. After the war Smith wrote under the same pen name for the *Atlanta Constitution* for some thirty years. Once he abandoned the humorous misspelling, which he considered a useless convention; but pressure from his readers forced him to take it up again.

After writing the first of the ‘‘Bill Arp’’ letters, Smith read it aloud on the streets of Rome to two of his friends. The actual Bill Arp, an uneducated Georgia cracker, stopped to listen. ‘‘Squire,’’ said he, ‘‘are you gwine to print that?’’ ‘‘I reckon I will, Bill,’’ said the author. ‘‘What name are you gwine to put to it?’’ said Arp. ‘‘I don’t know yet,’’ said Smith. ‘‘I haven’t thought about a name.’’ Then Arp brightened up and said: ‘‘Well, Squire, I wish you would put mine, for them’s my sentiments.’’

The letter to Artemus Ward, printed four or five months after the collapse of the Confederacy, reflects the feelings of the defeated and humiliated South. The *Louisville Courier-Journal* commented: ‘‘It was the first chirp of any bird after the surrender, and gave relief and hope to thousands of drooping hearts.’’ See J. M. Steadman’s sketch of Smith in the *D. A. B.*; Walter Blair, *Native American Humor* (1937); and Jennette Tandy, *Crackerbox Philosophers* (1925).

BILL ARP ADDRESSES ARTEMUS WARD

from BILL ARP’S PEACE PAPERS (1873)

ROME, GA., September 1, 1865.

Mr. Artemus Ward, *Showman*,

SUR: The reesun I write to you in pertikler, is bekaus you are about the only man I know in all ‘‘God’s kountry,’’ *so called*. For sum sevrul years

we Rebs, *so called*, but now late of said kountry deceased, hav been a tryin mity hard to do sumthin. We didn’t quite do it, and now it is very paneful, I ashoor you, to dry up all of a sudden, and make out like we wasn’t there.

5 My friend, I want to say sumthin. I spose there is no law agin thinkin, but thinkin don’t help me. It don’t let down my thermomyter. I must xplode myself genrully so as to feel better.

You see I am tryin to harmonise. I'm trying to soften down my feelins. I'm endeverin to sub-jergate myself to the level of surroundin sir-kumstances, *so called*. But I can't do it till I am allowed to say sumthin. I want to quarrel with sumboddy and then make frends. I ain't no giant killer. I ain't no Norwegun bar. I ain't no Bo Konstriker, but I'll be hornswoggled if the talkin, and the writin, and the slanderin hav got to be all done on one side eny longer. Sum of your foaks hav got to dry up or turn our foaks loose. It's a blamed outrage, *so called*. Ain't your editors got nuthin else to do but to peck at us, skwib at us, and krow over us? Is evry man what can write a paragraf to konsider us as bars in a kage, and be always a jobbin at us to hear us growl? Now you see, my frend, that's what's disharmonyus, and do you jest tell em, one and all, E Pluribus Unum, *so called*, that if they don't stop it at onst, or turn us loose to say what we please, why we Rebs, *so called*, hav unanimously, and jintly, and sevrully resolved to—to—to—think very hard of it—if not harder.

That's the way to talk it. I ain't a gwine to kommit myself. I know when to put on the brakes. I ain't a gwine to say *all* I think. Nary time. No, sur. But I'll jest tell you, Artemus, and you may tell it to your show! If we ain't allowed to xpress our sentiments, we can take it out in *hatin*; and hatin runs hevvy in my family, shore. I hated a man so bad onst that all the hare cum off my hed, and the man drowned himself in a hog waller that nite. I could do it agin, but you see I am tryin to harmonise, to acquiesc, to becum cam and sereen.

*"In Dixie's fall,
We sinned all."*

But talkin the way I see it, a big feller and a little feller, *so called*, got into a fite, and they fout, and fout, and fout a long time, and evry boddy all around a hollerin hands off, but kep a helpin the big feller, till finally the little feller caved in and hollered enuf. He made a bully fite, I tell you, selah. Well, what did the big feller do? Take him by the han and help him up, and bresh the dirt offen his close? Nary time! No, sur? But he kiked him atter he was down and throwd mud on him and drug him about and rubbed sand in his eyes and now hes a gwine about a huntin up his poor little property. Wants to konfiscate it *so called*. Blame my jacket if it ain't enuf to make your hed swim.

But *I'm* a good Union man *so called*. I ain't a gwine to fite any more. I shan't vote for the next war I ain't no gurilla. I've dun tuk the oath, and I'm gwine to keep it, but as for my bein subjergated, and humilyated, and amal-gamated, and enervated, as Mr. Chase says, it ain't so—nary time. I ain't ashamed of nuthin, neather—ain't repentin—ain't axin for no one hoss, short-winded pardin. Nobody needn't be a playin preest about me. I ain't got no twenty thousan dollars. Wish I had; I'd give it to these poor widders and orfins. I'd fatten my own numerus and interestin offspring in about two minits and a half. They shouldn't eat roots and drink branch water no longer. Poor unfortunate things? To cum into this sublooonery world at sich a time. Ther's Bull Run Arp, and Harper's Ferry Arp, and Chickahominy Arp, that never seed the pikturs in a spellin book. I tell you, my frend, we are the poorest peepul on the face of the yearth—but we are poor and proud. We made a bully fite, selah, and the whole Amerikan nation ought to feel proud of it. It shows what Amerikans can do when they think they are imposed on—"so called." Didn't our four fathers fite, bleed, and die about a little tax on tea, when not one in a thousan drunk it? Becaus they sukseeded, wasn't it glory? But if they hadn't, I spose it would hav been treeson, and they would have been a bowin and scrapin around King George for pardin. So it goes, Artemus, and to my mind, if the whole thing was stewed down it would make about a haf pint of humbug. We had good men, grate men, kristyun men, who thot we was right, and many of them hav gone to the undiskivered kountry, and hav got a pardin as is a pardin. When I die I am mighty willin to risk myself under the shadder of their wings, whether the klimate is hot or cold. So mote it be. Selah!

Well, maybe I've sed enuf. But I don't feel esy yet. I'm a good Union man, sertin and shore. I've had my britches dide *blue*, and I've bot a *blue* blankit, and I very often feel *blue*, and about twist in a while I go to the doggery and get *blue*, and then I look up at the *blue* serulyan hevins and sing the melonkolly korus of the *Blue*-tailed fly. I'm doin my durndest to harmonise, and I think I could sukseed if it wasn't for sum things. When I see a blakgard a goin roun the streets with a gun on his shoulder, why rite then, for a few minits, I hate the whole Yanky nashun. Jerusalem! how my blood biles!

The institushun which wer handed down to us by the hevinly kingdom of Massychusetts, now put over us with powder and ball! Harmonise the devil! Ain't we human beins? Ain't we got eyes and ears and fealin and thinkin? Why the whole of Afriky have cum to town, wimmin and children, and boys and baboons, and all A man can tell how far it ar to the sitty better by the smell than the mile-post They won't work for us, and they won't work for themselves, and they'll perish to deth this winter, as shore as the devil is a hog, *so called*. They are now baskin in the summer's sun, a livin on roastin ears and freedum, with nary idee that winter will cum agin, or that Caster Ile and Salts cost munny. Sum of em, a hundred years old, are a whinin aroun about going to kawllidge. The truth is, my friend, sumboddy's badly fooled about this bizniss Sumboddy have drawd the elefant in the lottery, and don't know what to do with him. He's jest a throwin his snout aroun loose, and by and by he'll hurt sumboddy. These niggers will have to go back to the plantashuns and wurk. I ain't a goin to support nary one of em, and when you heer anybody say so, you tell em its a lie, *so called*. By golly, I ain't got nuthin to support myself on. We fout ourselves out of everything, xceptin children and land, and I spose the land are to be turned over to the niggers for graveyards.

Well, my frend, I don't want mutch. I ain't ambishus, as I used to was. You all have got your shose, and monkys, and sirkusses, and brass bans, and orgins, and can play on the petrolyum and the harp of a thousan strings, and so on, but I've only got one favor to ax

of you. I want enuf powder to kill a big yaller stumptake dog that prowls aroun my prem-myses at nite. Pon honer I won't shoot eny-thing blue, black or mullatter. Will you send it? Are you, and your foaks so skeered of me, and my foaks, that you won't let us hav any amunishun? Are the squirrells and krows, and blak rakkoons to eat up our poor littel korn paches? Are the wild turkys to gobbel all roun us with impunity? If a mad dog takes the hyderfoby, is the hole kommunity to run itself to deth to git out of the way? I golly! It looks like foaks had all took the rebelfoby for good, and was never a gwine to git over it. See here, my frend, you must send me a little powder and a ticket to your show, and me and you will harmonise sertin.

With these few remarks I think I feel better, and hope I ain't made noboddy fitin mad, for I am not on that line at this time.

I am truly your frend, all present, or ak-kounted for.

BILL ARP, *so called*.

P.S.—Old man Harris wanted to buy my fiddle the other day with Konfedrit munny. He said it would be good agin. *He* says that Jim Funderburk told him that Warren's Jack seed a man what had jest cum from Virginny, and *he* said a man had told his cousin Mandy that Lee had whipped em *agin*. Old Harris says that a man by the name of Mack C. Million is a comin over with a million o' men. But nevertheless, notwithstanding, sumhow else, I'm dubus about the munny. If you was me, Artemus, would you make the fiddle trade?

DANIEL WEBSTER

1782 - 1852

In America from the outbreak of the Revolution to the close of the Civil War oratory was a political weapon of greater importance than it was to be until the radio enabled Franklin D.

1782-1852-----DANIEL WEBSTER

Roosevelt and Winston Churchill to speak to an audience of millions. Daniel Webster, on the whole, seems the greatest of American orators. His speeches possess a literary quality which makes them more readable than those of Henry Clay or John C. Calhoun. Webster was born in New Hampshire and educated at Dartmouth College. In 1816 he settled in Boston, and during the greater portion of his later life he was Senator from Massachusetts. He became the political idol of his section. Emerson, who praised him in his Phi Beta Kappa poem of 1834, wrote to Carlyle on August 8, 1839:

"I cannot tell you how glad I am that you have seen my brave Senator, and seen him as I see him. . . . We send out usually mean persons as public agents, mere partisans, for whom I can only hope that no man with eyes will meet them; and now those thirsty eyes, those portrait-eating, portrait-painting eyes of thine, those fatal perceptions, have fallen full on the great forehead which I followed about all my young days, from court-house to senate-chamber, from caucus to street. He has his own sins no doubt, is no saint, is a prodigal. He has drunk this rum of Party too long, that his strong head is soaked, sometimes even like the soft sponges, but the 'man's a man for a' that.' "

On June 24 of the same year Carlyle had written to Emerson:

"Not many days ago I saw at breakfast the notabest of all your Notabilities, Daniel Webster. He is a magnificent specimen; you might say to all the world, This is your Yankee Englishman, such Limbs *we* make in Yankeeland! As a Logic-fencer, Advocate, or Parliamentary Hercules, one would incline to back him at first sight against all the extant world. The tanned complexion, that amorphous crag-like face, the dull black eyes under their precipice of brows, like dull anthracite furnaces, needing only to be *blown*; the mastiff-mouth, accurately closed:—I have not traced as much of *silent Berserker-rage*, that I remember of, in any other man."

Until his Seventh of March Speech in 1850—when many New Englanders turned against him (see the notes on Whittier's "Ichabod," p. 570)—Webster was the idol of New England. For us here, he is chiefly important as the champion of the nationalistic view of the federal Constitution. His best statement of the constitutional argument is found in his 1833 address, "The Constitution not a Compact between Sovereign States"; but the Reply to Hayne contains perhaps the most eloquent passages to be found in all Webster's speeches. The debate between Webster and Senator Robert Y. Hayne of South Carolina—no mean antagonist—was not a model debate, for the resolution under discussion received scant mention from either Senator. The speech from which our selection is taken was the second of Webster's three speeches in reply to Hayne. The South Carolina view of the Constitution is well stated in Calhoun's 1850 Speech on the Slavery Question. At the time of the Webster-Hayne debate, in January, 1830, the Nullification controversy was approaching its climax.

For an excellent study of Webster's oratory, see W. N. Brigance (ed.), *A History and Criticism of American Public Address* (1943).

from THE REPLY TO HAYNE (1830)

Then, Sir, the gentleman has no fault to find with these recently promulgated South Carolina opinions. And certainly he need have none, for his own sentiments, as now advanced, and advanced on reflection, as far as I have been able to comprehend them, go the full length of all these opinions. I propose, Sir, to say something on these, and to consider how far they are just and constitutional. Before doing that, however, let me observe that the eulogium pronounced by the honorable gentleman on the character of the State of South Carolina, for her Revolutionary and other merits, meets my hearty concurrence. I shall not acknowledge that the honorable member goes before me in regard for whatever of distinguished talent, or distinguished character, South Carolina has produced. I claim part of the honor, I partake in the pride, of her great names. I claim them for countrymen, one and all, the Laurenses, the Rutledges, the Pinckneys, the Sumpters, the Marions, Americans all, whose fame is no more to be hemmed in by State lines, than their talents and patriotism were capable of being circumscribed within the same narrow limits. In their day and generation, they served and honored the country, and the whole country; and their renown is of the treasures of the whole country. Him whose honored name the gentleman himself bears,—does he esteem me less capable of gratitude for his patriotism, or sympathy for his sufferings, than if his eyes had first opened upon the light of Massachusetts, instead of South Carolina? Sir, does he suppose it in his power to exhibit a Carolina name so bright as to produce envy in my bosom? No, Sir, increased gratification and delight, rather. I thank God, that, if I am gifted with little of the spirit which is able to raise mortals to the skies, I have yet none, as I trust, of that other spirit, which would drag angels down. When I shall be found, Sir, in my place here in the Senate, or elsewhere, to sneer at public merit, because it happens to spring up beyond the little limits of my own State or neighborhood; when I refuse, for any such cause or for any cause, the homage due to American talent, to elevated patriotism, to sincere devotion to liberty and the country; or, if I see an uncommon endowment of Heaven, if I see extraordinary capacity and virtue, in any son of the

South, and if, moved by local prejudice or gangrened by State jealousy, I get up here to abate the tithe of a hair from his just character and just fame, may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!

Sir, let me recur to pleasing recollections, let me indulge in refreshing remembrance of the past; let me remind you that, in early times, no States cherished greater harmony, both in principle and feeling, than Massachusetts and South Carolina. Would to God that harmony might again return! Shoulder to shoulder they went through the Revolution, hand in hand they stood round the administration of Washington, and felt his own great arm lean on them for support. Unkind feeling, if it exist, alienation, and distrust are the growth, unnatural to such soils, of false principles since sown. They are weeds, the seeds of which that same great arm never scattered.

Mr President, I shall enter on no encomium upon Massachusetts, she needs none. There she is. Behold her, and judge for yourselves. There is her history; the world knows it by heart. The past, at least, is secure. There is Boston, and Concord, and Lexington, and Bunker Hill; and there they will remain forever. The bones of her sons, falling in the great struggle for Independence, now lie mingled with the soil of every State from New England to Georgia; and there they will lie forever. And Sir, where American Liberty raised its first voice, and where its youth was nurtured and sustained, there it still lives, in the strength of its manhood and full of its original spirit. If discord and disunion shall wound it, if party strife and blind ambition shall hawk at and tear it, if folly and madness, if uneasiness under salutary and necessary restraint, shall succeed in separating it from that Union, by which alone its existence is made sure, it will stand, in the end, by the side of that cradle in which its infancy was rocked; it will stretch forth its arm with whatever of vigor it may still retain over the friends who gather round it; and it will fall at last, if fall it must, amidst the proudest monuments of its own glory, and on the very spot of its origin.

There yet remains to be performed, Mr. President, by far the most grave and important duty, which I feel to be devolved on me by this occasion. It is to state, and to defend,

what I conceive to be the true principles of the Constitution under which we are here assembled. I might well have desired that so weighty a task should have fallen into other and abler hands. I could have wished that it should have been executed by those whose character and experience give weight and influence to their opinions, such as cannot possibly belong to mine. But, Sir, I have met the occasion, not sought it; and I shall proceed to state my own sentiments, without challenging for them any particular regard, with studied plainness, and as much precision as possible.

I understand the honorable gentleman from South Carolina to maintain, that it is a right of the State legislatures to interfere, whenever, in their judgment, this government transcends its constitutional limits, and to arrest the operation of its laws.

I understand him to maintain this right, as a right existing *under* the Constitution, not as a right to overthrow it on the ground of extreme necessity, such as would justify violent revolution.

I understand him to maintain an authority, on the part of the States, thus to interfere, for the purpose of correcting the exercise of power by the general government, of checking it, and of compelling it to conform to their opinion of the extent of its powers.

I understand him to maintain, that the ultimate power of judging of the constitutional extent of its own authority is not lodged exclusively in the general government, or any branch of it; but that, on the contrary, the States may lawfully decide for themselves, and each State for itself, whether, in a given case, the act of the general government transcends its power.

I understand him to insist, that, if the exigency of the case, in the opinion of any State government, require it, such State government may, by its own sovereign authority, annul an act of the general government which it deems plainly and palpably unconstitutional.

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I must now beg to ask, Sir, Whence is this supposed right of the States derived? Where do they find the power to interfere with the laws of the Union? Sir, the opinion which the honorable gentleman maintains is a notion founded in a total misapprehension, in my

judgment, of the origin of this government, and of the foundation on which it stands. I hold it to be a popular government, erected by the people; those who administer it, responsible to the people, and itself capable of being amended and modified, just as the people may choose it should be. It is as popular, just as truly emanating from the people, as the State governments. It is created for one purpose; the State governments for another. It has its own powers, they have theirs. There is no more authority with them to arrest the operation of a law of Congress, than with Congress to arrest the operation of their laws. We are here to administer a Constitution emanating directly from the people, and trusted by them to our administration. It is not the creature of the State governments. It is of no moment to the argument, that certain acts of the State legislatures are necessary to fill our seats in this body. That is not one of their original State powers, a part of the sovereignty of the State. It is a duty which the people, by the Constitution itself, have imposed on the State legislatures; and which they might have left to be performed elsewhere, if they had seen fit. So they have left the choice of President with electors, but all this does not affect the proposition that this whole government, President, Senate, and House of Representatives, is a popular government. It leaves it still all its popular character. The governor of a State (in some of the States) is chosen, not directly by the people, but by those who are chosen by the people, for the purpose of performing, among other duties, that of electing a governor. Is the government of the State, on that account, not a popular government? This government, Sir, is the independent offspring of the popular will. It is not the creature of State legislatures; nay, more, if the whole truth must be told, the people brought it into existence, established it, and have hitherto supported it, for the very purpose, amongst others, of imposing certain salutary restraints on State sovereignties. The States cannot now make war; they cannot contract alliances; they cannot make, each for itself, separate regulations of commerce; they cannot lay imposts; they cannot coin money. If this Constitution, Sir, be the creature of State legislatures, it must be admitted that it has obtained control over the volitions of its creators.

The people, then, Sir, erected this government. They gave it a Constitution, and in that Constitution they have enumerated the powers which they bestow on it. They have made it a limited government. They have defined its authority. They have restrained it to the exercise of such powers as are granted; and all others, they declare, are reserved to the States or the people. But, Sir, they have not stopped here. If they had, they would have accomplished but half their work. No definition can be so clear, as to avoid possibly of doubt; no limitation so precise as to exclude all uncertainty. Who, then, shall construe this grant of the people? Who shall interpret their will, where it may be supposed they have left it doubtful? With whom do they repose this ultimate right of deciding on the powers of the government? Sir, they have settled all this in the fullest manner. They have left it with the government itself, in its appropriate branches. Sir, the very chief end, the main design, for which the whole Constitution was framed and adopted, was to establish a government that should not be obliged to act through State agency, or depend on State opinion and State discretion. The people had had quite enough of that kind of government under the Confederation. Under that system, the legal action, the application of law to individuals, belonged exclusively to the States. Congress could only recommend; their acts were not of binding force, till the States had adopted and sanctioned them. Are we in that condition still? Are we yet at the mercy of State discretion and State construction? Sir, if we are, then vain will be our attempts to maintain the Constitution under which we sit.

But, Sir, the people have wisely provided, in the Constitution itself, a proper, suitable mode and tribunal for settling questions of constitutional law. There are in the Constitution grants of power to Congress, and restrictions on these powers. There are, also, prohibitions on the States. Some authority must, therefore, necessarily exist, having the ultimate jurisdiction to fix and ascertain the interpretation of these grants, restrictions, and prohibitions. The Constitution has itself pointed out, ordained, and established that authority. How has it accomplished this great and essential end? By declaring, Sir, that "*the Constitution, and the laws of the United States made in pursuance thereof,*

shall be the supreme law of the land, anything in the constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding"

This, Sir, was the first great step. By this the supremacy of the Constitution and laws of the United States is declared. The people so will it. No State law is to be valid which comes in conflict with the Constitution, or any law of the United States passed in pursuance of it. But who shall decide this question of interference? To whom lies the last appeal? This, Sir, the Constitution itself decides also, by declaring, "*that the judicial power shall extend to all cases arising under the Constitution and laws of the United States.*" These two provisions cover the whole ground. They are, in truth, the keystone of the arch! With these it is a government; without them it is a confederation. In pursuance of these clear and express provisions, Congress established, at its very first session, in the judicial act, a mode for carrying them into full effect, and for bringing all questions of constitutional power to the final decision of the Supreme Court. It then, Sir, became a government. It then had the means of self-protection; and but for this, it would, in all probability, have been now among things which are past. Having constituted the government, and declared its powers, the people have further said, that, since somebody must decide on the extent of these powers, the government shall itself decide; subject, always, like other popular governments, to its responsibility to the people. And now, Sir, I repeat, how is it that a State legislature acquires any power to interfere? Who, or what, gives them the right to say to the people, "We, who are your agents and servants for one purpose, will undertake to decide, that your other agents and servants, appointed by you for another purpose, have transcended the authority you gave them!" The reply would be, I think, not impertinent, "Who made you a judge over another's servants? To their own masters they stand or fall."

Sir, I deny this power of State legislatures altogether. It cannot stand the test of examination. Gentlemen may say, that, in an extreme case, a State government might protect the people from intolerable oppression. Sir, in such a case, the people might protect themselves, without the aid of the State governments. Such a case warrants revolution. It must

make, when it comes, a law for itself A nullifying act of a State legislature cannot alter the case, nor make resistance any more lawful. In maintaining these sentiments, Sir, I am but asserting the rights of the people. I state what they have declared, and insist on their right to declare it. They have chosen to repose this power in the general government, and I think it my duty to support it, like other constitutional powers.

For myself, Sir, I do not admit the competency of South Carolina, or any other State, to prescribe my constitutional duty; or to settle, between me and the people, the validity of laws of Congress for which I have voted. I decline her umpirage. I have not sworn to support the Constitution according to her construction of its clauses. I have not stipulated, by my oath of office or otherwise, to come under any responsibility, except to the people, and those whom they have appointed to pass upon the question, whether laws, supported by my votes, conform to the Constitution of the country. And, Sir, if we look to the general nature of the case, could anything have been more preposterous, than to make a government for the whole Union, and yet leave its powers subject, not to one interpretation, but to thirteen or twenty-four interpretations? Instead of one tribunal, established by all, responsible to all, with power to decide for all, shall constitutional questions be left to four-and-twenty popular bodies, each at liberty to decide for itself, and none bound to respect the decisions of others,—and each at liberty, too, to give a new construction on every new election of its own members? Would anything, with such a principle in it, or rather with such a destitution of all principle, be fit to be called a government? No, Sir. It should not be denominated a Constitution. It should be called, rather, a collection of topics for everlasting controversy; heads of debate for a disputatious people. It would not be a government. It would not be adequate to any practical good, or fit for any country to live under.

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Mr. President, I have thus stated the reasons of my dissent to the doctrines which have been advanced and maintained. I am conscious of

having detained you and the Senate much too long. I was drawn into the debate with no previous deliberation, such as is suited to the discussion of so grave and important a subject. But it is a subject of which my heart is full, and I have not been willing to suppress the utterance of its spontaneous sentiments. I cannot, even now, persuade myself to relinquish it, without expressing once more my deep conviction, that, since it respects nothing less than the Union of the States, it is of most vital and essential importance to the public happiness. I profess, Sir, in my career hitherto, to have kept steadily in view the prosperity and honor of the whole country, and the preservation of our Federal Union. It is to that Union we owe our safety at home, and our consideration and dignity abroad. It is to that Union that we are chiefly indebted for whatever makes us most proud of our country. That Union we reached only by the discipline of our virtues in the severe school of adversity. It had its origin in the necessities of disordered finance, prostrate commerce, and ruined credit. Under its benign influence, these great interests immediately awoke, as from the dead, and sprang forth with newness of life. Every year of its duration has teemed with fresh proofs of its utility and its blessings; and although our territory has stretched out wider and wider, and our population spread farther and farther, they have not outrun its protection or its benefits. It has been to us all a copious fountain of national, social, and personal happiness.

I have not allowed myself, Sir, to look beyond the Union, to see what might lie hidden in the dark recess behind. I have not coolly weighed the chances of preserving liberty when the bonds that unite us together shall be broken asunder. I have not accustomed myself to hang over the precipice of disunion, to see whether, with my short sight, I can fathom the depth of the abyss below; nor could I regard him as a safe counsellor in the affairs of this government, whose thoughts should be mainly bent on considering, not how the Union may be best preserved, but how tolerable might be the condition of the people when it should be broken up and destroyed. While the Union lasts, we have high, exciting, gratifying prospects spread out before us, for us and our children. Beyond that I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant

that, in my day, at least, that curtain may not rise! God grant that on my vision never may be opened what lies behind! When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood! Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre, not a stripe erased or polluted, nor a single star obscured, bearing

ing for its motto, no such miserable interrogatory as "What is all this worth?" nor those other words of delusion and folly, "Liberty first and Union afterwards", but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart,—Liberty *and* Union, now and for ever, one and inseparable!¹

¹ Cf. Andrew Jackson's famous toast: "The Federal Union—it must be preserved," and the toast which Calhoun proposed immediately afterwards: "The Federal Union—next to our liberty the most dear."

JOHN CALDWELL CALHOUN

1782 - 1850

The political principles of Calhoun have had scant justice done them by later generations who incline to accept the easy opinion that the cause which triumphs is altogether the better cause.

—V. L. PARRINGTON, *Main Currents in American Thought* (1927), II, 81.

The ablest advocate of state rights, Calhoun, was born in the South Carolina up-country of pioneer Scotch-Irish stock. The reading of Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding* when he was thirteen awakened his intellectual interests, as it had quickened those of Jonathan Edwards, who read it at fourteen. He was prepared for college by the Presbyterian minister, Moses Waddel, most famous Southern schoolmaster of his day. At Yale, from which Calhoun was graduated in 1804, President Timothy Dwight is said to have remarked that Calhoun had talent enough to be the President of the United States. Calhoun studied law at Litchfield, Connecticut, under Judges Tapping Reeve and James Gould. Both his teachers are believed to have held secessionist views, but Calhoun was at this time a nationalist and a Jeffersonian Democrat. He practiced law only a short time. He took his seat in the House of Representatives in 1811 and was in the continuous service of his country until his death in 1850. He was Secretary of War, Secretary of State, and Vice-President, but he made his greatest impression in the Senate, where the most notable figures were Daniel Webster and Henry Clay.

Calhoun's political career divides into two distinct parts. Up to about 1828 he was an ardent nationalist and in his own words "no advocate for refined arguments on the Constitution." His views gradually shifted as it became clear to him that the Southern states constituted a minority section whose rights were being threatened by a rapidly growing industrial North. Like most Southerners, he felt that by means of a high tariff and other methods Northern industrialists were exploiting the Southern farmers. "A single section governed by the will of the numerical majority," he said, "has now, in fact, the control of the Government and the entire powers of the system. What was once a constitutional federal republic, is now converted, in reality, into one as absolute as that of the Autocrat of Russia, and as despotic in its tendency as any absolute government that ever existed." Class and sectional legislation, he felt, were undermining Southern loyalty to the Union. Calhoun, who tended to think in terms of reason and justice, was disillusioned to discover that politicians, influenced by economic interests and pressure groups, often failed to consider the interests of the nation as a whole.

Calhoun's mature views are expressed in two treatises published after his death: *A Disquisition on Government* and *A Discourse on the Constitution and Government of the United States*. Neither of these treatises received his final revision, but in their way they constitute a document as notable as *The Federalist*. The *Disquisition* shows how far Southern political thinkers had departed from the teachings of Jefferson. Calhoun did not believe that "all men are equal in the state of nature," for such a state, he thought, "never did, nor can exist." Security seemed to him more important than liberty; and liberty, he wrote, "is a reward to be earned, not a blessing to be gratuitously lavished on all alike. . . ." Inequality seemed to him the necessary result of liberty and at the same time a spur to progress. He did not share Jefferson's or Emerson's optimistic views of the nature of man. The function of constitutional government, as he saw it, was to give stability to political institutions and to counteract "the tendency of government to oppression and abuse." Calhoun's views were developed in defense of the Southern way of life, of which slavery was an essential part; but the problem which Calhoun thought about so continually is still with us. There is always the danger, as Alexis de Tocqueville and James Bryce have emphasized in *Democracy in America* and *The American Commonwealth*, that the numerical majority may oppress and abuse a minority region, class, or interest.

See H. L. Curry's excellent discussion of Calhoun in W. N. Brigance (ed.), *A History and Criticism of American Public Address* (1943), and Charles M. Wiltse, *John C. Calhoun, Nationalist, 1782-1828*.

[The Concurrent Majority]

from A DISQUISITION ON
GOVERNMENT (1851)

As, then, the right of suffrage, without some other provision, cannot counteract this tendency of government [to oppression and abuse

of power], the next question for consideration is—What is that other provision? This demands the most serious consideration; for of all the questions embraced in the science of government, it involves a principle, the most important, and the least understood; and when understood, the most difficult of application in practice. It is, indeed, emphatically, that prin-

ciple which *makes* the constitution, in its strict and limited sense.

From what has been said, it is manifest, that this provision must be of a character calculated to prevent any one interest, or combination of interests, from using the powers of government to aggrandize itself at the expense of the others. Here lies the evil: and just in proportion as it shall prevent, or fail to prevent it, in the same degree it will effect, or fail to effect the end intended to be accomplished. There is but one certain mode in which this result can be secured; and that is, by the adoption of some restriction or limitation, which shall so effectually prevent any one interest, or combination of interests, from obtaining the exclusive control of the government, as to render hopeless all attempts directed to that end. There is, again, but one mode in which this can be effected; and that is by taking the sense of each interest or portion of the community, which may be unequally and injuriously affected by the action of the government, separately, through its own majority, or in some other way by which its voice may be fairly expressed; and to require the consent of each interest, either to put or to keep the government in action. This, too, can be accomplished only in one way,—and that is, by such an organism of the government,—and, if necessary for the purpose, of the community also,—as will, by dividing and distributing the powers of government, give to each division or interest, through its appropriate organ, either a concurrent voice in making and executing the laws, or a veto on their execution. It is only by such an organism, that the assent of each can be made necessary to put the government in motion;—and it is only by the one or the other that the different interests, orders, classes, or portions, into which the community may be divided, can be protected, and all conflict and struggle between them prevented,—by rendering it impossible to put or to keep it in action, without the concurrent consent of all.

Such an organism as this, combined with the right of suffrage, constitutes, in fact, the elements of constitutional government. The one, by rendering those who make and execute the laws responsible to those on whom they operate, prevents the rulers from oppressing the ruled; and the other, by making it impossible for any one interest or combination of interests or class, or order, or portion of the community, to obtain

exclusive control, prevents any one of them from oppressing the other. It is clear, that oppression and abuse of power must come, if at all, from the one or the other quarter. From no other can it come. It follows, that the two, suffrage and proper organism combined, are sufficient to counteract the tendency of government to oppression and abuse of power; and to restrict it to the fulfilment of the great ends for which it is ordained.

In coming to this conclusion, I have assumed the organism to be perfect, and the different interests, portions, or classes of the community, to be sufficiently enlightened to understand its character and object, and to exercise, with due intelligence, the right of suffrage. To the extent that either may be defective, to the same extent the government would fall short of fulfilling its end. But this does not impeach the truth of the principles on which it rests. In reducing them to proper form, in applying them to practical uses, all elementary principles are liable to difficulties; but they are not, on this account, the less true, or valuable. Where the organism is perfect, every interest will be truly and fully represented, and of course the whole community must be so. It may be difficult, or even impossible, to make a perfect organism—but, although this be true, yet even when, instead of the sense of each and of all, it takes that of a few great and prominent interests only, it would still, in a great measure, if not altogether, fulfil the end intended by a constitution. For, in such case, it would require so large a portion of the community, compared with the whole, to concur, or acquiesce in the action of the government, that the number to be plundered would be too few, and the number to be aggrandized too many, to afford adequate motives to oppression and the abuse of its powers. Indeed, however imperfect the organism, it must have more or less effect in diminishing such tendency.

It may be readily inferred, from what has been stated, that the effect of organism is neither to supersede nor diminish the importance of the right of suffrage; but to aid and perfect it. The object of the latter is to collect the sense of the community. The more fully and perfectly it accomplishes this, the more fully and perfectly it fulfils its end. But the most it can do, of itself, is to collect the sense of the greater number; that is, of the stronger interests, or combination of interests; and to assume this to be the sense of

the community. It is only when aided by a proper organism, that it can collect the sense of the entire community—of each and all its interests; of each, through its appropriate organ, and of the whole, through all of them united. This would truly be the sense of the entire community; for whatever diversity each interest might have within itself—as all would have the same interest in reference to the action of the government, the individuals composing each would be fully and truly represented by its own majority or appropriate organ, regarded in reference to the other interests. In brief, every individual of every interest might trust, with confidence, its majority or appropriate organ, against that of every other interest.

It results, from what has been said, that there are two different modes in which the sense of the community may be taken; one, simply by the right of suffrage, unaided; the other, by the right through a proper organism. Each collects the sense of the majority. But one regards numbers only, and considers the whole community as a unit, having but one common interest throughout; and collects the sense of the greater number of the whole, as that of the community. The other, on the contrary, regards interests as well as numbers; considering the community as made up of different and conflicting interests, as far as the action of the government is concerned; and takes the sense of each, through its majority or appropriate organ, and the united sense of all, as the sense of the entire community. The former of these I shall call the numerical, or absolute majority; and the latter, the concurrent, or constitutional majority. I call it the constitutional majority, because it is an essential element in every constitutional government,—be its form what it may. So great is the difference, politically speaking, between the two majorities, that they cannot be confounded, without leading to great and fatal errors; and yet the distinction between them has been so entirely overlooked, that when the term *majority* is used in political discussions, it is applied exclusively to designate the numerical—as if there were no other. Until this distinction is recognized, and better understood, there will continue to be great liability to error in properly constructing constitutional governments, especially of the popular form, and of preserving them when properly constructed. Until then, the latter will have a strong tendency to slide, first, into the

government of the numerical majority, and, finally, into absolute government of some other form. To show that such must be the case, and at the same time to mark more strongly the difference between the two, in order to guard against the danger of overlooking it, I propose to consider the subject more at length.

The first and leading error which naturally arises from overlooking the distinction referred to, is, to confound the numerical majority with the people; and this so completely as to regard them as identical. This is a consequence that necessarily results from considering the numerical as the only majority. All admit, that a popular government, or democracy, is the government of the people; for the terms imply this. A perfect government of the kind would be one which would embrace the consent of every citizen or member of the community; but as this is impracticable, in the opinion of those who regard the numerical as the only majority, and who can perceive no other way by which the sense of the people can be taken,—they are compelled to adopt this as the only true basis of popular government, in contradistinction to governments of the aristocratical or monarchical form. Being thus constrained, they are, in the next place, forced to regard the numerical majority, as, in effect, the entire people; that is, the greater part as the whole; and the government of the greater part as the government of the whole. It is thus the two come to be confounded, and a part made identical with the whole. And it is thus, also, that all the rights, powers, and immunities of the whole people come to be attributed to the numerical majority; and, among others, the supreme, sovereign authority of establishing and abolishing governments at pleasure.

This radical error, the consequence of confounding the two, and of regarding the numerical as the only majority, has contributed more than any other cause, to prevent the formation of popular constitutional governments,—and to destroy them even when they have been formed. It leads to the conclusion, that, in their formation and establishment nothing more is necessary than the right of suffrage,—and the allotment to each division of the community a representation in the government, in proportion to numbers. If the numerical majority were really the people; and if, to take its sense truly, were to take the sense of the people truly, a

government so constituted would be a true and perfect model of a popular constitutional government; and every departure from it would detract from its excellence. But, as such is not the case,—as the numerical majority, instead of being the people, is only a portion of them,—such a government, instead of being a true and perfect model of the people's government, that is, a people self-governed, is but the government of a part, over a part,—the major over the minor portion.

But this misconception of the true elements of constitutional government does not stop here. It leads to others equally false and fatal, in reference to the best means of preserving and perpetuating them, when, from some fortunate combination of circumstances, they are correctly formed. For they who fall into these errors regard the restrictions which organism imposes on the will of the numerical majority as restrictions on the will of the people, and, therefore, as not only useless, but wrongful and mischievous. And hence they endeavor to destroy organism, under the delusive hope of making government more democratic.

Such are some of the consequences of confounding the two, and of regarding the numerical as the only majority. And in this may be found the reason why so few popular governments have been properly constructed, and why, of these few, so small a number have proved durable. Such must continue to be the result, so long as these errors continue to be prevalent.

There is another error, of a kindred character, whose influence contributes much to the same results. I refer to the prevalent opinion, that a written constitution, containing suitable restrictions on the powers of government, is sufficient, of itself, without the aid of any organism,—except such as is necessary to separate its several departments, and render them independent of each other,—to counteract the tendency of the numerical majority to oppression and the abuse of power.

A written constitution certainly has many and considerable advantages; but it is a great mistake to suppose, that the mere insertion of provisions to restrict and limit the powers of the government, without investing those for whose protection they are inserted with the means of enforcing their observance, will be sufficient to prevent the major and dominant party from abusing its powers. Being the party in posses-

sion of the government, they will, from the same constitution of man which makes government necessary to protect society, be in favor of the powers granted by the constitution, and opposed to the restrictions intended to limit them. As the major and dominant party, they will have no need of these restrictions for their protection. The ballot-box, of itself, would be ample protection to them. Needing no other, they would come, in time, to regard these limitations as unnecessary and improper restraints;—and endeavor to elude them with the view of increasing their power and influence.

The minor, or weaker party, on the contrary, would take the opposite direction;—and regard them as essential to their protection against the dominant party. And, hence, they would endeavor to defend and enlarge the restrictions, and to limit and contract the powers. But where there are no means by which they could compel the major party to observe the restrictions, the only resort left them would be, a strict construction of the constitution,—that is, a construction which would confine these powers to the narrowest limits which the meaning of the words used would admit.

To this the major party would oppose a liberal construction,—one which would give to the words of the grant the broadest meaning of which they were susceptible. It would then be construction against construction; the one to contract, and the other to enlarge the powers of government to the utmost. But of what possible avail could the strict construction of the minor party be, against the liberal interpretation of the major, when the one would have all the powers of the government to carry its construction into effect,—and the other be deprived of all means of enforcing its construction? In a contest so unequal, the result would not be doubtful. The party in favor of the restrictions would be overpowered. At first, they might command some respect, and do something to stay the march of encroachment; but they would, in the progress of the contest, be regarded as mere abstractionists; and, indeed, deservedly, if they should indulge the folly of supposing that the party in possession of the ballot-box and the physical force of the country, could be successfully resisted by an appeal to reason, truth, justice or the obligations imposed by the constitution. For when these, of themselves, shall exert sufficient influence to stay the hand of power, then government will be no

longer necessary to protect society, nor constitutions needed to prevent government from abusing its powers. The end of the contest would be the subversion of the constitution, either by the undermining process of construction,—where its meaning would admit of possible doubt,—or by substituting in practice what is called party-usage, in place of its provisions,—or, finally, when no other contrivance would subserve the purpose, by openly and boldly setting them aside. By the one or the other, the restrictions would ultimately be annulled, and the government be converted into one of unlimited powers.

Nor would the division of government into separate, and, as it regards each other, independent departments, prevent this result. Such a division may do much to facilitate its operations, and to secure to its administration greater caution and deliberation; but as each and all the departments,—and, of course, the entire government,—would be under the control of the numerical majority, it is too clear to require explanation, that a mere distribution of its powers among its agents or representatives, could do little or nothing to counteract its tendency to oppression and abuse of power. To effect this, it would be necessary to go one step further, and make the several departments the organs of the distinct interests or portions of the community; and to clothe each with a negative on the others. But the effect of this would be to change the government from the numerical into the concurrent majority.

Having now explained the reasons why it is so difficult to form and preserve popular constitutional government, so long as the distinction between the two majorities is overlooked, and the opinion prevails that a written constitution, with suitable restrictions and a proper division of its powers, is sufficient to counteract the tendency of the numerical majority to the abuse of its power,—I shall next proceed to explain, more fully, why the concurrent majority is an indispensable element in forming constitutional governments; and why the numerical majority, of itself, must, in all cases, make governments absolute.

The necessary consequence of taking the sense of the community by the concurrent majority is, as has been explained, to give to each interest or portion of the community a negative on the others. It is this mutual negative among its various conflicting interests, which invests each with

the power of protecting itself,—and places the rights and safety of each, where only they can be securely placed, under its own guardianship. Without this there can be no systematic, peaceful, or effective resistance to the natural tendency of each to come into conflict with the others: and without this there can be no constitution. It is this negative power,—the power of preventing or arresting the action of the government,—be it called by what term it may,—veto, interposition, nullification, check, or balance of power,—which, in fact, forms the constitution. They are all but different names for the negative power. In all its forms, and under all its names, it results from the concurrent majority. Without this there can be no negative; and, without a negative, no constitution. The assertion is true in reference to all constitutional governments, be their forms what they may. It is, indeed, the negative power which makes the constitution,—and the positive which makes the government. The one is the power of acting;—and the other the power of preventing or arresting action. The two, combined, make constitutional governments.

But, as there can be no constitution without the negative power, and no negative power without the concurrent majority;—it follows, necessarily, that where the numerical majority has the sole control of the government, there can be no constitution; as constitution implies limitation or restriction,—and, of course, is inconsistent with the idea of sole or exclusive power. And hence, the numerical, unmixed with the concurrent majority, necessarily forms, in all cases, absolute government.

It is, indeed, the single, or *one power*, which excludes the negative, and constitutes absolute government; and not the *number* in whom the power is vested. The numerical majority is as truly a *single power*, and excludes the negative as completely as the absolute government of one, or of the few. The former is as much the absolute government of the democratic, or popular form, as the latter of the monarchical or aristocratical. It has, accordingly, in common with them, the same tendency to oppression and abuse of power.

Constitutional governments of whatever form, are, indeed, much more similar to each other, in their structure and character, than they are, respectively, to the absolute governments, even of their own class. All constitutional governments of whatever class they may be, take the sense

of the community by its parts,—each through its appropriate organ; and regard the sense of all its parts, as the sense of the whole. They all rest on the right of suffrage, and the responsibility of rulers, directly or indirectly. On the contrary, all absolute governments, of whatever form, concentrate power in one uncontrolled and irresponsible individual or body, whose will is regarded as the sense of the community. And, hence, the great and broad distinction between governments is,—not that of the one, the few, or the many,—but of the constitutional and the absolute.

From this there results another distinction, which, although secondary in its character, very strongly marks the difference between these forms of government. I refer to their respective conservative principle;—that is, the principle by which they are upheld and preserved. This principle, in constitutional governments, is *compromise*; and in absolute governments, is *force*,—as will be next explained.

It has been already shown, that the same constitution of man which leads those who govern to oppress the governed,—if not prevented,—will, with equal force and certainty, lead the latter to resist oppression, when possessed of the means of doing so peaceably and successfully. But absolute governments, of all forms, exclude all other means of resistance to their authority, than that of force; and, of course, leave no other alterna-

tive to the governed, but to acquiesce in oppression, however great it may be, or to resort to force to put down the government. But the dread of such a resort must necessarily lead the government to prepare to meet force in order to protect itself, and hence, of necessity, force becomes the conservative principle of all such governments.

On the contrary, the government of the concurrent majority, where the organism is perfect, excludes the possibility of oppression, by giving to each interest, or portion, or order,—where there are established classes,—the means of protecting itself, by giving its negative, against all measures calculated to advance the peculiar interests of others at its expense. Its effect, then, is to cause the different interests, portions, or orders,—as the case may be,—to desist from attempting to adopt any measure calculated to promote the prosperity of one, or more, by sacrificing that of others; and thus to force them to unite in such measures only as would promote the prosperity of all, as the only means to prevent the suspension of the action of the government;—and, thereby, to avoid anarchy, the greatest of all evils. It is by means of such authorized and effectual resistance, that oppression is prevented, and the necessity of resorting to force superseded, in governments of the concurrent majority;—and, hence, compromise, instead of force, becomes their conservative principle.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

1809 - 1865

*A blend of mirth and sadness, smiles and tears;
A quaint knight-errant of the pioneers;
A homely hero born of star and sod;
A Peasant Prince; a Masterpiece of God.*

—WALTER MALONE, "Abraham Lincoln."

An account of Lincoln's life would be out of place here, especially as his brief autobiography is given below. There are many excellent biographies. The most detailed is that written by his

two secretaries, John Nicolay and John Hay, in ten volumes, published in 1890. There are other excellent biographies by Carl Sandburg, Ida M. Tarbell, Nathaniel W. Stephenson, W. H. Herndon (his law partner), and Albert J. Beveridge. Lord Charnwood's biography inspired John Drinkwater's play, *Abraham Lincoln*. Nicolay and Hay edited *The Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln* (1894) in two volumes. A twelve-volume edition of this in 1905 contains R. W. Gilder's essay, "Lincoln as a Writer." Lincoln's methods as a speaker are treated in two chapters in W. N. Brigance (ed.), *A History and Criticism of American Public Address* (1943). See also D. K. Dodge, *Abraham Lincoln Master of Words*, and L. E. Robinson, *Abraham Lincoln as a Man of Letters*. Nathaniel W. Stephenson contributed the chapter on Lincoln in the *C. H. A. L. His Lincoln* (1922) gives the best account of Lincoln's growth in the power to express himself. Of the many volumes of selections, the best is *Abraham Lincoln: His Speeches and Writings* (1946), edited by Roy P. Basler, who has taken great pains with the text of Lincoln's writings and has contributed an important study of "Lincoln's Development as a Writer." Dr. Basler is the general editor of a new and complete edition of Lincoln's works to be published by the Abraham Lincoln Association. Following the selections from Lincoln will be found selections from other writers illustrating the part which he has played in what we may call the Lincoln literary legend.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

(1859)

I was born February 12, 1809, in Hardin County, Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families—second families, perhaps I should say. My mother, who died in my tenth year, was of a family of the name of Hanks, some of whom now reside in Adams, and others in Macon County, Illinois. My paternal grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, emigrated from Rockingham County, Virginia, to Kentucky about 1781 or 1782, where a year or two later he was killed by the Indians, not in battle, but by stealth, when he was laboring to open a farm in the forest. His ancestors, who were Quakers, went to Virginia from Berks County, Pennsylvania. An effort to identify them with the New England family of the same name ended in nothing more definite than a similarity of Christian names in both families, such as Enoch, Levi, Mordecai, Solomon, Abraham, and the like.

My father, at the death of his father, was but six years of age, and he grew up literally without education. He removed from Kentucky to what is now Spencer County, Indiana, in my eighth year. We reached our new home about the time

the state came into the Union. It was a wild region, with many bears and other wild animals still in the woods. There I grew up. There were some schools, so called, but no qualification was ever required of a teacher beyond "readin', writin', and cipherin'" to the rule of three. If a straggler supposed to understand Latin happened to sojourn in the neighborhood, he was looked upon as a wizard. There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education. Of course, when I came of age I did not know much. Still, somehow, I could read, write, and cipher to the rule of three, but that was all. I have not been to school since. The little advance I now have upon this store of education, I have picked up from time to time under the pressure of necessity.

I was raised to farm work, which I continued till I was twenty-two. At twenty-one I came to Illinois, Macon County. Then I got to New Salem, at that time in Sangamon, now in Menard County, where I remained a year as a sort of clerk in a store. Then came the Black Hawk War; and I was elected a captain of volunteers, a success which gave me more pleasure than any I have had since. I went the campaign, was elated, ran for the legislature the same year (1832), and was beaten—the only time I ever

have been beaten by the people. The next and three succeeding biennial elections I was elected to the legislature. I was not a candidate afterward. During this legislative period I had studied law, and removed to Springfield to practise it. In 1846 I was once elected to the lower House of Congress. Was not a candidate for re-election. From 1849 to 1854, both inclusive, practised law more assiduously than ever before. Always a Whig in politics, and generally on the Whig electoral tickets, making active canvasses. I was losing interest in politics when the repeal of the Missouri Compromise aroused me again. What I have done since that is pretty well known

If any personal description of me is thought desirable, it may be said I am, in height, six feet four inches, nearly, lean in flesh, weighing on an average one hundred and eighty pounds, dark complexion, with coarse black hair and gray eyes. No other marks or brands recollected.

TO JOHN D. JOHNSTON

January 2 [?] 1851

DEAR JOHNSTON: Your request for eighty dollars I do not think best to comply with now. At the various times when I have helped you a little you have said to me, "We can get along very well now"; but in a very short time I find you in the same difficulty again. Now this can only happen by some defect in your conduct. What that defect is, I think I know. You are not lazy, and still you are an idler. I doubt whether, since I saw you, you have done a good whole day's work in any one day. You do not very much dislike to work, and still you do not work much, merely because it does not seem to you that you could get much for it. This habit of uselessly wasting time is the whole difficulty; it is vastly important to you, and still more so to your children, that you should break the habit. It is more important to them, because they have longer to live, and can keep out of an idle habit before they are in it, easier than they can get out after they are in.

You are now in need of some money; and what I propose is, that you shall go to work, "tooth and nail," for somebody who will give you money for it. Let father and your boys take charge of your things at home, prepare for a crop, and make the crop, and you go to work for the best money wages, or in discharge of any debt

you owe, that you can get; and to secure you a fair reward for your labor, I now promise you, that for every dollar that you will, between this and the first of May, get for your own labor, either in money or as your own indebtedness, I will then give you one other dollar. By this, if you hire yourself at ten dollars a month, from me you will get ten more, making twenty dollars a month for your work. In this I do not mean you shall go off to St. Louis, or the lead mines, or the gold mines in California, but I mean for you to go at it for the best wages you can get close to home in Coles County. Now, if you will do this, you will soon be out of debt, and, what is better, you will have a habit that will keep you from getting in debt again. But if I should now clear you out of debt, next year you would be just as deep in as ever. You say you would almost give your place in heaven for seventy or eighty dollars. Then you value your place in heaven very cheap, for I am sure you can, with the offer I make, get the seventy or eighty dollars for four or five months' work. You say if I will furnish you the money you will deed me the land, and, if you don't pay the money back, you will deliver possession. Nonsense! If you can't now live with the land, how will you then live without it? You have always been kind to me, and I do not mean to be unkind to you. On the contrary, if you will but follow my advice, you will find it worth more than eighty times eighty dollars to you.

Affectionately your brother,

A. LINCOLN.

SPEECH AT COOPER UNION

February 27, 1860

The speeches which Lincoln delivered in his unsuccessful campaign against Douglas for the Senate in 1858 made him a leading figure in the Middle West. The Cooper Union speech brought him to the attention of many eastern Republicans. William Cullen Bryant was the presiding officer.

MR. PRESIDENT AND FELLOW-CITIZENS OF NEW YORK: The facts with which I shall deal this evening are mainly old and familiar; nor is there anything new in the general use I shall make of them. If there shall be any novelty, it will be in the mode of presenting the facts, and the inferences and observations following that presentation. In his speech last autumn at Columbus,

Ohio, as reported in the *New York Times*, Senator Douglas said.

"Our fathers, when they framed the government under which we live, understood this question just as well, and even better, than we do now."

I fully indorse this, and I adopt it as a text for this discourse. I so adopt it because it furnishes a precise and an agreed starting-point for a discussion between Republicans and that wing of the Democracy headed by Senator Douglas. It simply leaves the inquiry: What was the understanding those fathers had of the question mentioned?

What is the frame of government under which we live? The answer must be, "The Constitution of the United States." That Constitution consists of the original, framed in 1787, and under which the present government first went into operation, and twelve subsequently framed amendments, the first ten of which were framed in 1789.

Who were our fathers that framed the Constitution? I suppose the "thirty-nine" who signed the original instrument may be fairly called our fathers who framed that part of the present government. It is almost exactly true to say they framed it, and it is altogether true to say they fairly represented the opinion and sentiment of the whole nation at that time. Their names, being familiar to nearly all, and accessible to quite all, need not now be repeated.

I take these "thirty-nine," for the present, as being "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." What is the question which, according to the text, those fathers understood "just as well, and even better, than we do now"?

It is this: Does the proper division of local from federal authority, or anything in the Constitution, forbid our federal government to control as to slavery in our federal territories?

Upon this, Senator Douglas holds the affirmative, and Republicans the negative. This affirmation and denial form an issue; and this issue—this question—is precisely what the text declares our fathers understood "better than we." Let us now inquire whether the "thirty-nine," or any of them, ever acted upon this question; and if they did, how they acted upon it—how they expressed that better understanding. In 1784, three years before the Constitution, the United States

then owning the Northwestern Territory, and no other, the Congress of the Confederation had before them the question of prohibiting slavery in that territory; and four of the "thirty-nine" who afterward framed the Constitution were in that Congress, and voted on that question. Of these, Roger Sherman, Thomas Mifflin, and Hugh Williamson voted for the prohibition, thus showing that, in their understanding, no line dividing local from federal authority, nor anything else, properly forbade the federal government to control as to slavery in federal territory. The other of the four, James McHenry, voted against the prohibition, showing that for some cause he thought it improper to vote for it.

In 1787, still before the Constitution, but while the convention was in session framing it, and while the Northwestern Territory still was the only territory owned by the United States, the same question of prohibiting slavery in the territory again came before the Congress of the Confederation, and two more of the "thirty-nine" who afterward signed the Constitution were in that Congress, and voted on the question. They were William Blount and William Few; and they both voted for the prohibition—thus showing that in their understanding no line dividing local from federal authority, nor anything else, properly forbade the federal government to control as to slavery in federal territory. This time the prohibition became a law, being part of what is now well known as the Ordinance of '87.

The question of federal control of slavery in the territories seems not to have been directly before the convention which framed the original Constitution; and hence it is not recorded that the "thirty-nine," or any of them, while engaged on that instrument, expressed any opinion on that precise question.

In 1789, by the first Congress which sat under the Constitution, an act was passed to enforce the Ordinance of '87, including the prohibition of slavery in the Northwestern Territory. The bill for this act was reported by one of the "thirty-nine"—Thomas Fitzsimmons, then a member of the House of Representatives from Pennsylvania. It went through all its stages without a word of opposition, and finally passed both branches without ayes and nays, which is equivalent to a unanimous passage. In this Congress there were sixteen of the thirty-nine fathers

who framed the original Constitution. They were John Langdon, Nicholas Gilman, William S. Johnson, Roger Sherman, Robert Morris, Thomas Fitzsimmons, William Few, Abraham Baldwin, Rufus King, William Paterson, George Clymer, Richard Bassett, George Read, Pierce Butler, Daniel Carroll, and James Madison.

This shows that, in their understanding, no line dividing local from federal authority, nor anything in the Constitution, properly forbade Congress to prohibit slavery in the federal territory, else both their fidelity to correct principle, and their oath to support the Constitution, would have constrained them to oppose the prohibition.

Again, George Washington, another of the "thirty-nine," was then President of the United States, and as such approved and signed the bill, thus completing its validity as a law, and thus showing that, in his understanding, no line dividing local from federal authority, nor anything in the Constitution, forbade the federal government to control as to slavery in federal territory.

No great while after the adoption of the original Constitution, North Carolina ceded to the federal government the country now constituting the state of Tennessee; and a few years later Georgia ceded that which now constitutes the states of Mississippi and Alabama. In both deeds of cession it was made a condition by the ceding states that the federal government should not prohibit slavery in the ceded country. Besides this, slavery was then actually in the ceded country. Under these circumstances, Congress, on taking charge of these countries, did not absolutely prohibit slavery within them. But they did interfere with it—take control of it—even there, to a certain extent. In 1798 Congress organized the Territory of Mississippi. In the act of organization they prohibited the bringing of slaves into the Territory from any place without the United States, by fine, and giving freedom to slaves so brought. This act passed both branches of Congress without yeas and nays. In that Congress were three of the "thirty-nine" who framed the original Constitution. They were John Langdon, George Read, and Abraham Baldwin. They all probably voted for it. Certainly they would have placed their opposition to it upon record if, in their understanding, any line dividing local from federal authority, or anything in the

Constitution, properly forbade the federal government to control as to slavery in federal territory.

In 1803 the federal government purchased the Louisiana country. Our former territorial acquisitions came from certain of our own states; but this Louisiana country was acquired from a foreign nation. In 1804 Congress gave a territorial organization to that part of it which now constitutes the state of Louisiana. New Orleans, lying within that part, was an old and comparatively large city. There were other considerable towns and settlements, and slavery was extensively and thoroughly intermingled with the people. Congress did not, in the Territorial Act, prohibit slavery; but they did interfere with it—take control of it—in a more marked and extensive way than they did in the case of Mississippi. The substance of the provision therein made in relation to slaves was:

1st. That no slave should be imported into the territory from foreign parts.

2nd. That no slave should be carried into it who had been imported into the United States since the first day of May, 1798.

3d. That no slave should be carried into it, except by the owner, and for his own use as a settler; the penalty in all the cases being a fine upon the violator of the law, and freedom to the slave.

This act also was passed without ayes or nays. In the Congress which passed it there were two of the "thirty-nine." They were Abraham Baldwin and Jonathan Dayton. As stated in the case of Mississippi, it is probable they both voted for it. They would not have allowed it to pass without recording their opposition to it if in their understanding, it violated either the line properly dividing local from federal authority or any provision of the Constitution.

In 1819-20 came and passed the Missouri question. Many votes were taken, by yeas and nays in both branches of Congress, upon the various phases of the general question. Two of the "thirty-nine"—Rufus King and Charles Pinckney—were members of that Congress. Mr. King steadily voted for slavery prohibition and against all compromises, while Mr. Pinckney as steadily voted against slavery prohibition and against all compromises. By this, Mr. King showed that, in his understanding, no line dividing local from federal authority, nor anything in the Constitu-

tion, was violated by Congress prohibiting slavery in federal territory, while Mr. Pinckney, by his votes, showed that, in his understanding, there was some sufficient reason for opposing such prohibition in that case.

The cases I have mentioned are the only acts of the "thirty-nine," or of any of them, upon the direct issue, which I have been able to discover.

To enumerate the persons who thus acted as being four in 1784, two in 1787, seventeen in 1789, three in 1798, two in 1804, and two in 1819-20, there would be thirty of them. But this would be counting John Langdon, Roger Sherman, William Few, Rufus King, and George Read each twice, and Abraham Baldwin three times. The true number of those of the "thirty-nine" whom I have shown to have acted upon the question which, by the text, they understood better than we, is twenty-three, leaving sixteen not shown to have acted upon it in any way.

Here, then, we have twenty-three out of our thirty-nine fathers "who framed the government under which we live," who have, upon their official responsibility and their corporal oaths, acted upon the very question which the text affirms they "understood just as well, and even better, than we do now"; and twenty-one of them—a clear majority of the whole "thirty-nine"—so acting upon it as to make them guilty of gross political impropriety and willful perjury if, in their understanding, any proper division between local and federal authority, or anything in the Constitution they had made themselves, and sworn to support, forbade the federal government to control as to slavery in the federal territories. Thus the twenty-one acted; and, as actions speak louder than words, so actions under such responsibility speak still louder.

Two of the twenty-three voted against congressional prohibition of slavery in the federal territories, in the instances in which they acted upon the question. But for what reasons they so voted is not known. They may have done so because they thought a proper division of local from federal authority, or some provision or principle of the Constitution, stood in the way; or they may, without any such question, have voted against the prohibition on what appeared to them to be sufficient grounds of expediency. No one who has sworn to support the Constitution can conscientiously vote for what he under-

stands to be an unconstitutional measure, however expedient he may think it; but one may and ought to vote against a measure which he deems constitutional if, at the same time, he deems it inexpedient. It, therefore, would be unsafe to set down even the two who voted against the prohibition as having done so because, in their understanding, any proper division of local from federal authority, or anything in the Constitution, forbade the federal government to control as to slavery in federal territory.

The remaining sixteen of the "thirty-nine," so far as I have discovered, have left no record of their understanding upon the direct question of federal control of slavery in the federal territories. But there is much reason to believe that their understanding upon that question would not have appeared different from that of their twenty-three compeers, had it been manifested at all.

For the purpose of adhering rigidly to the text, I have purposely omitted whatever understanding may have been manifested by any person, however distinguished, other than the thirty-nine fathers who framed the original Constitution; and, for the same reason, I have also omitted whatever understanding may have been manifested by any of the "thirty-nine" even on any other phase of the general question of slavery. If we should look into their acts and declarations on those other phases, as the foreign slave-trade, and the morality and policy of slavery generally, it would appear to us that on the direct question of federal control of slavery in federal territories, the sixteen, if they had acted at all, would probably have acted just as the twenty-three did. Among that sixteen were several of the most noted anti-slavery men of those times,—as Dr. Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and Gouverneur Morris,—while there was not one now known to have been otherwise, unless it may be John Rutledge, of South Carolina.

The sum of the whole is that of our thirty-nine fathers who framed the original Constitution, twenty-one—a clear majority of the whole—certainly understood that no proper division of local from federal authority, nor any part of the Constitution, forbade the federal government to control slavery in the federal territories; while all the rest had probably the same understanding. Such, unquestionably, was the understanding of our fathers who framed the original

Constitution; and the text affirms that they understood the question "better than we "

But, so far, I have been considering the understanding of the question manifested by the framers of the original Constitution In and by the original instrument, a mode was provided for amending it; and, as I have already stated, the present frame of "the government under which we live" consists of that original, and twelve amendatory articles framed and adopted since. Those who now insist that federal control of slavery in federal territories violates the Constitution, point us to the provisions which they suppose it thus violates; and, as I understand, they all fix upon provisions in these amendatory articles, and not in the original instrument The Supreme Court, in the Dred Scott case, plant themselves upon the Fifth Amendment, which provides that no person shall be deprived of "life, liberty, or property without due process of law"; while Senator Douglas and his peculiar adherents plant themselves upon the Tenth Amendment, providing that "the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution" "are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people."

Now, it so happens that these amendments were framed by the first Congress which sat under the Constitution—the identical Congress which passed the act, already mentioned, enforcing the prohibition of slavery in the Northwestern Territory. Not only was it the same Congress, but they were the identical, same individual men who, at the same session, and at the same time within the session, had under consideration, and in progress toward maturity, these constitutional amendments, and this act prohibiting slavery in all the territory the nation then owned. The constitutional amendments were introduced before, and passed after, the act enforcing the Ordinance of '87; so that, during the whole pendency of the act to enforce the ordinance, the constitutional amendments were also pending.

The seventy-six members of that Congress, including sixteen of the framers of the original Constitution, as before stated, were pre-eminently our fathers who framed that part of "the government under which we live" which is now claimed as forbidding the federal government to control slavery in the federal territories.

Is it not a little presumptuous in any one at this day to affirm that the two things which that Congress deliberately framed, and carried to maturity at the same time, are absolutely inconsistent with each other? And does not such affirmation become impudently absurd when coupled with the other affirmation, from the same mouth, that those who did the two things alleged to be inconsistent, understood whether they really were inconsistent better than we—better than he who affirms that they are inconsistent?

It is surely safe to assume that the thirty-nine framers of the original Constitution, and the seventy-six members of the Congress which framed the amendments thereto, taken together, do certainly include those who may be fairly called "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." And so assuming, I defy any man to show that any one of them ever, in his whole life, declared that, in his understanding, any proper division of local from federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbade the federal government to control as to slavery in the federal territories. I go a step further. I defy any one to show that any living man in the whole world ever did, prior to the beginning of the present century (and I might almost say prior to the beginning of the last half of the present century), declare that, in his understanding, any proper division of local from federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbade the federal government to control as to slavery in the federal territories. To those who now so declare I give not only "our fathers who framed the government under which we live," but with them all other living men within the century in which it was framed, among whom to search, and they shall not be able to find the evidence of a single man agreeing with them.

Now, and here, let me guard a little against being misunderstood, I do not mean to say we are bound to follow implicitly in whatever our fathers did. To do so would be to discard all the lights of current experience—to reject all progress, all improvement. What I do say is that if we would supplant the opinions and policy of our fathers in any case, we should do so upon evidence so conclusive, and argument so clear, that even their great authority, fairly considered and weighed, cannot stand; and most surely not

in a case whereof we ourselves declare they understood the question better than we.

If any man at this day sincerely believes that a proper division of local from federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbids the federal government to control as to slavery in the federal territories, he is right to say so, and to enforce his position by all truthful evidence and fair argument which he can. But he has no right to mislead others, who have less access to history, and less leisure to study it, into the false belief that "our fathers who framed the government under which we live" were of the same opinion—thus substituting falsehood and deception for truthful evidence and fair argument. If any man at this day sincerely believes "our fathers who framed the government under which we live" used and applied principles, in other cases, which ought to have led them to understand that a proper division of local from federal authority, or some part of the Constitution, forbids the federal government to control as to slavery in the federal territories, he is right to say so. But he should, at the same time, brave the responsibility of declaring that, in his opinion, he understands their principles better than they did themselves; and especially should he not shirk that responsibility by asserting that they "understood the question just as well, and even better, than we do now."

But enough! Let all who believe that "our fathers who framed the government under which we live understand this question just as well, and even better, than we do now," speak as they spoke, and act as they acted upon it. This is all Republicans ask—all Republicans desire—in relation to slavery. As those fathers marked it, so let it be again marked, as an evil not to be extended, but to be tolerated and protected only because of and so far as its actual presence among us makes that toleration and protection a necessity. Let all the guaranties those fathers gave it be not grudgingly, but fully and fairly, maintained. For this Republicans contend, and with this, so far as I know or believe, they will be content.

And now, if they would listen,—as I suppose they will not,—I would address a few words to the Southern people.

I would say to them: You consider yourselves a reasonable and a just people; and I

consider that in the general qualities of reason and justice you are not inferior to any other people. Still, when you speak of us Republicans, you do so only to denounce us as reptiles, or, at the best, as no better than outlaws. You will grant a hearing to pirates or murderers, but nothing like it to "Black Republicans." In all your contentions with one another, each of you deems an unconditional condemnation of "Black Republicanism" as the first thing to be attended to. Indeed, such condemnation of us seems to be an indispensable prerequisite—license, so to speak—among you to be admitted or permitted to speak at all. Now can you or not be prevailed upon to pause and to consider whether this is quite just to us, or even to yourselves? Bring forward your charges and specifications, and then be patient long enough to hear us deny or justify.

You say we are sectional. We deny it. That makes an issue; and the burden of proof is upon you. You produce your proof; and what is it? Why, that our party has no existence in your section—gets no votes in your section. The fact is substantially true, but does it prove the issue? If it does, then in case we should, without change of principle, begin to get votes in your section, we should thereby cease to be sectional. You cannot escape this conclusion; and yet, are you willing to abide by it? If you are, you will probably soon find that we have ceased to be sectional, for we shall get votes in your section this very year. You will then begin to discover, as the truth plainly is, that your proof does not touch the issue. The fact that we get no votes in your section is a fact of your making, and not of ours. And if there be fault in that fact, that fault is primarily yours, and remains so until you show that we repel you by some wrong principle or practice. If we do repel you by any wrong principle or practice, the fault is ours; but this brings you to where you ought to have started—to a discussion of the right or wrong of our principle. If our principle, put in practice, would wrong your section for the benefit of ours, or for any other object, then our principle, and we with it, are sectional, and are justly opposed and denounced as such. Meet us, then, on the question of whether our principle, put in practice, would wrong your section; and so meet us as if it were possible that something may be said on our side. Do you accept the chal-

lenge? No! then you really believe that the principle which "our fathers who framed the government under which we live" thought so clearly right as to adopt it, and indorse it again and again, upon their official oaths, is in fact so clearly wrong as to demand your condemnation without a moment's consideration.

Some of you delight to flaunt in our faces the warning against sectional parties given by Washington in his Farewell Address. Less than eight years before Washington gave that warning, he had, as President of the United States, approved and signed an act of Congress enforcing the prohibition of slavery in the Northwestern Territory, which act embodied the policy of the government upon that subject up to and at the very moment he penned that warning; and about one year after he penned it, he wrote Lafayette that he considered that prohibition a wise measure, expressing in the same connection his hope that we should at some time have a confederacy of free states.

Bearing this in mind, and seeing that sectionalism has since arisen upon this same subject, is that warning a weapon in your hands against us, or in our hands against you? Could Washington himself speak, would he cast the blame of that sectionalism upon us, who sustain his policy, or upon you, who repudiate it? We respect that warning of Washington, and we commend it to you, together with his example pointing to the right application of it.

But you say you are conservative—eminently conservative—while we are revolutionary, destructive, or something of the sort. What is conservatism? Is it not adherence to the old and tried, against the new and untried? We stick to, contend for, the identical old policy on the point in controversy which was adopted by "our fathers who framed the government under which we live"; while you with one accord reject, and scout, and spit upon that old policy, and insist upon substituting something new. True, you disagree among yourselves as to what that substitute shall be. You are divided on new propositions and plans, but you are unanimous in rejecting and denouncing the old policy of the fathers. Some of you are for reviving the foreign slave-trade; some for a congressional slave-code for the territories; some for Congress forbidding the territories to prohibit slavery within their limits; some for maintaining slavery

in the territories through the judiciary; some for the "gur-reat pur-rinciple" that "if one man would enslave another, no third man should object," fantastically called "popular sovereignty"; but never a man among you is in favor of federal prohibition of slavery in federal territories, according to the practice of "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." Not one of all your various plans can show a precedent or an advocate in the century within which our government originated. Consider then, whether your claim of conservatism for yourselves, and your charge of destructiveness against us, are based on the most clear and stable foundations.

Again, you say we have made the slavery question more prominent than it formerly was. We deny it. We admit that it is more prominent, but we deny that we made it so. It was not we, but you, who discarded the old policy of the fathers. We resisted, and still resist, your innovation; and thence comes the greater prominence of the question. Would you have that question reduced to its former proportions? Go back to that old policy. What has been will be again, under the same conditions. If you would have the peace of the old times, readopt the precepts and policy of the old times.

You charge that we stir up insurrections among your slaves. We deny it; and what is your proof? Harper's Ferry! John Brown!! John Brown was no Republican; and you have failed to implicate a single Republican in his Harper's Ferry enterprise. If any member of our party is guilty in that matter, you know it or you do not know it. If you do know it, you are inexcusable for not designating the man and proving the fact. If you do not know it, you are inexcusable for asserting it, and especially for persisting in the assertion after you have tried and failed to make the proof. You need not be told that persisting in a charge which one does not know to be true, is simply malicious slander.

Some of you admit that no Republican designedly aided or encouraged the Harper's Ferry affair, but still insist that our doctrines and declarations necessarily lead to such results. We do not believe it. We know we hold no doctrine, and make no declaration, which were not held to and made by "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." You never dealt fairly by us in relation to this

affair When it occurred, some important state elections were near at hand, and you were in evident glee with the belief that, by charging the blame upon us, you could get an advantage of us in those elections. The elections came, and your expectations were not quite fulfilled. Every Republican man knew that, as to himself at least, your charge was a slander, and he was not much inclined by it to cast his vote in your favor. Republican doctrines and declarations are accompanied with a continual protest against any interference whatever with your slaves, or with you about your slaves. Surely, this does not encourage them to revolt. True, we do, in common with "our fathers who framed the government under which we live," declare our belief that slavery is wrong; but the slaves do not hear us declare even this. For anything we say or do, the slaves would scarcely know there is a Republican party I believe they would not, in fact, generally know it but for your misrepresentations of us in their hearing. In your political contests among yourselves, each faction charges the other with sympathy with Black Republicanism; and then, to give point to the charge, defines Black Republicanism to simply be insurrection, blood, and thunder among the slaves.

Slave insurrections are no more common now than they were before the Republican party was organized. What induced the Southampton insurrection, twenty-eight years ago, in which at least three times as many lives were lost as at Harper's Ferry? You can scarcely stretch your very elastic fancy to the conclusion that Southampton was "got up by Black Republicanism." In the present state of things in the United States, I do not think a general, or even a very extensive, slave insurrection is possible. The indispensable concert of action cannot be attained. The slaves have no means of rapid communication; nor can incendiary freemen, black or white, supply it. The explosive materials are everywhere in parcels; but there neither are, nor can be supplied, the indispensable connecting trains.

Much is said by Southern people about the affection of slaves for their masters and mistresses; and a part of it, at least, is true. A plot for an uprising could scarcely be devised and communicated to twenty individuals before some one of them, to save the life of a favorite

master or mistress, would divulge it. This is the rule, and the slave revolution in Haiti was not an exception to it, but a case occurring under peculiar circumstances. The gunpowder plot of British history, though not connected with slaves, was more in point. In that case, only about twenty were admitted to the secret; and yet one of them, in his anxiety to save a friend, betrayed the plot to that friend, and, by consequence, averted the calamity. Occasional poisonings from the kitchen, and open or stealthy assassinations in the field, and local revolts extending to a score or so, will continue to occur as the natural results of slavery; but no general insurrection of slaves, as I think, can happen in this country for a long time. Whoever much fears, or much hopes, for such an event, will be alike disappointed.

In the language of Mr. Jefferson, uttered many years ago, "It is still in our power to direct the process of emancipation and deportation peaceably, and in such slow degrees, as that the evil will wear off insensibly; and their places be, *pari passu*, filled up by free white laborers. If, on the contrary, it is left to force itself on, human nature must shudder at the prospect held up."

Mr. Jefferson did not mean to say, nor do I, that the power of emancipation is in the federal government. He spoke of Virginia; and, as to the power of emancipation, I speak of the slaveholding states only. The federal government, however, as we insist, has the power of restraining the extension of the institution—the power to insure that a slave insurrection shall never occur on any American soil which is now free from slavery.

John Brown's effort was peculiar. It was not a slave insurrection. It was an attempt by white men to get up a revolt among slaves, in which the slaves refused to participate. In fact, it was so absurd that the slaves, with all their ignorance, saw plainly enough it could not succeed. That affair, in its philosophy, corresponds with the many attempts, related in history, at the assassination of kings and emperors. An enthusiast broods over the oppression of a people till he fancies himself commissioned by Heaven to liberate them. He ventures the attempt, which ends in little else than his own execution. Orsini's attempt on Louis Napoleon, and John Brown's attempt at Harper's Ferry,

were, in their philosophy, precisely the same. The eagerness to cast blame on old England in the one case, and on New England in the other, does not disprove the sameness of the two things.

And how much would it avail you, if you could, by the use of John Brown, Helper's book, and the like, break up the Republican organization? Human action can be modified to some extent, but human nature cannot be changed. There is a judgment and a feeling against slavery in this nation, which cast at least a million and a half of votes. You cannot destroy that judgment and feeling—that sentiment—by breaking up the political organization which rallies around it. You can scarcely scatter and disperse an army which has been formed into order in the face of your heaviest fire; but if you could, how much would you gain by forcing the sentiment which created it out of the peaceful channel of the ballot-box into some other channel? What would that other channel probably be? Would the number of John Browns be lessened or enlarged by the operation?

But you will break up the Union rather than submit to a denial of your constitutional rights.

That has a somewhat reckless sound; but it would be palliated, if not fully justified, were we proposing, by the mere force of numbers, to deprive you of some right plainly written down in the Constitution. But we are proposing no such thing.

When you make these declarations you have a specific and well-understood allusion to an assumed constitutional right of yours to take slaves into the federal territories, and to hold them there as property. But no such right is specifically written in the Constitution. That instrument is literally silent about any such right. We, on the contrary, deny that such a right has any existence in the Constitution, even by implication.

Your purpose, then, plainly stated, is that you will destroy the government, unless you be allowed to construe and force the Constitution as you please, on all points in dispute between you and us. You will rule or ruin in all events.

This, plainly stated, is your language. Perhaps you will say the Supreme Court has decided the disputed constitutional question in your favor. Not quite so. But waiving the law-

yer's distinction between dictum and decision, the court has decided the question for you in a sort of way. The court has substantially said, it is your constitutional right to take slaves into the federal territories, and to hold them there as property. When I say the decision was made in a sort of way, I mean it was made in a divided court, by a bare majority of the judges, and they not quite agreeing with one another in the reasons for making it, that it is so made as that its avowed supporters disagree with one another about its meaning, and that it was mainly based upon a mistaken statement of fact—the statement in the opinion that “the right of property in a slave is distinctly and expressly affirmed in the Constitution.”

An inspection of the Constitution will show that the right of property in a slave is not “distinctly and expressly affirmed” in it. Bear in mind, the judges do not pledge their judicial opinion that such right is impliedly affirmed in the Constitution, but they pledge their veracity that it is “distinctly and expressly” affirmed there—“distinctly,” that is, not mingled with anything else—“expressly,” that is, in words meaning just that, without the aid of any inference, and susceptible of no other meaning.

If they had only pledged their judicial opinion that such right is affirmed in the instrument by implication, it would be open to others to show that neither the word “slave” nor “slavery” is to be found in the Constitution, nor the word “property” even, in any connection with language alluding to the things slave, or slavery; and that wherever in that instrument the slave is alluded to, he is called a “person”; and whenever his master's legal right in relation to him is alluded to, it is spoken of as “service or labor which may be due”—as a debt payable in service or labor. Also it would be open to show, by contemporaneous history, that this mode of alluding to slaves and slavery, instead of speaking of them, was employed on purpose to exclude from the Constitution the idea that there could be property in man.

To show all this is easy and certain.

When this obvious mistake of the judges shall be brought to their notice, is it not reasonable to expect that they will withdraw the mistaken statement, and reconsider the conclusion based upon it?

And then it is to be remembered that “our

fathers who framed the government under which we live"—the men who made the Constitution—decided this same constitutional question in our favor long ago. decided it without division among themselves when making the decision; without division among themselves about the meaning of it after it was made, and, so far as any evidence is left, without basing it upon any mistaken statement of facts.

Under all these circumstances, do you really feel yourselves justified to break up this government unless such a court decision as yours is shall be at once submitted to as a conclusive and final rule of political action? But you will not abide the election of a Republican President! In that supposed event, you say, you will destroy the Union; and then, you say, the great crime of having destroyed it will be upon us! That is cool. A highwayman holds a pistol to my ear, and mutters through his teeth, "Stand and deliver, or I shall kill you, and then you will be a murderer!"

To be sure, what the robber demanded of me—my money—was my own; and I had a clear right to keep it; but it was no more my own than my vote is my own; and the threat of death to me, to extort my money, and the threat of destruction to the Union, to extort my vote, can scarcely be distinguished in principle.

A few words now to Republicans. It is exceedingly desirable that all parts of this great confederacy shall be at peace, and in harmony one with another. Let us Republicans do our part to have it so. Even though much provoked, let us do nothing through passion and ill temper. Even though the Southern people will not so much as listen to us, let us calmly consider their demands, and yield to them if, in our deliberate view of our duty, we possibly can. Judging by all they say and do, and by the subject and nature of their controversy with us, let us determine, if we can, what will satisfy them.

Will they be satisfied if the territories be unconditionally surrendered to them? We know they will not. In all their present complaints against us, the territories are scarcely mentioned. Invasions and insurrections are the rage now. Will it satisfy them if, in the future, we have nothing to do with invasions and insurrections? We know it will not. We so know, because we know we never had anything to do with in-

vasions and insurrections; and yet this total abstaining does not exempt us from the charge and the denunciation.

The question recurs, What will satisfy them? Simply this: we must not only let them alone, but we must somehow convince them that we do let them alone. This, we know by experience, is no easy task. We have been so trying to convince them from the very beginning of our organization, but with no success. In all our platforms and speeches we have constantly protested our purpose to let them alone; but this has had no tendency to convince them. Alike unavailing to convince them is the fact that they have never detected a man of us in any attempt to disturb them.

These natural and apparently adequate means all failing, what will convince them? This, and this only: cease to call slavery wrong, and join them in calling it right. And this must be done thoroughly—done in acts as well as in words. Silence will not be tolerated—we must place ourselves avowedly with them. Senator Douglas's new sedition law must be enacted and enforced, suppressing all declarations that slavery is wrong, whether made in politics, in presses, in pulpits, or in private. We must arrest and return their fugitive slaves with greedy pleasure. We must pull down our free-state constitutions. The whole atmosphere must be disinfected from all taint of opposition to slavery, before they will cease to believe that all their troubles proceed from us.

I am quite aware they do not state their case precisely in this way. Most of them would probably say to us, "Let us alone; do nothing to us, and say what you please about slavery." But we do let them alone,—have never disturbed them,—so that, after all, it is what we say which dissatisfies them. They will continue to accuse us of doing, until we cease saying.

I am also aware they have not as yet in terms demanded the overthrow of our free-state constitutions. Yet those constitutions declare the wrong of slavery with more solemn emphasis than do all other sayings against it; and when all these other sayings shall have been silenced, the overthrow of these constitutions will be demanded, and nothing be left to resist the demand. It is nothing to the contrary that they do not demand the whole of this just now. Demanding what they do, and for the reason they

do, they can voluntarily stop nowhere short of this consummation. Holding, as they do, that slavery is morally right and socially elevating, they cannot cease to demand a full national recognition of it as a legal right and a social blessing.

Nor can we justifiably withhold this on any ground save our conviction that slavery is wrong. If slavery is right, all words, acts, laws, and constitutions against it are themselves wrong, and should be silenced and swept away. If it is right, we cannot justly object to its nationality—its universality; if it is wrong, they cannot justly insist upon its extension—its enlargement. All they ask we could readily grant, if we thought slavery right; all we ask they could as readily grant, if they thought it wrong. Their thinking it right and our thinking it wrong is the precise fact upon which depends the whole controversy. Thinking it right, as they do, they are not to blame for desiring its full recognition as being right; but thinking it wrong, as we do, can we yield to them? Can we cast our votes with their view, and against our own? In view of our moral, social, and political responsibilities, can we do this?

Wrong as we think slavery is, we can yet afford to let it alone where it is, because that much is due to the necessity arising from its actual presence in the nation; but can we, while our votes will prevent it, allow it to spread into the national territories, and to overrun us here in these free states? If our sense of duty forbids this, then let us stand by our duty fearlessly and effectively. Let us be diverted by none of those sophistical contrivances wherewith we are so industriously plied and belabored—contrivances such as groping for some middle ground between the right and the wrong; vain as the search for a man who should be neither a living man nor a dead man; such as a policy of “don’t care” on a question about which all true men do care; such as Union appeals beseeching true Union men to yield to Disunionists, reversing the divine rule, and calling, not the sinners, but the righteous to repentance; such as invitations to Washington, imploring men to unsay what Washington said and undo what Washington did.

Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false accusations against us, nor frightened from it by menaces of destruction to the government,

nor of dungeons to ourselves. Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it.

FAREWELL ADDRESS AT SPRINGFIELD

February 11, 1861

MY FRIENDS: No one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell.

TO HORACE GREELEY

This open letter was a reply to a communication which Greeley had printed in his newspaper, the *New York Tribune*, under the caption, “A Prayer of Twenty Millions.” Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation just one month after his letter to Greeley.

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON,
August 22, 1862.

HON. HORACE GREELEY:

DEAR SIR: I have just read yours of the 19th, addressed to myself through the *New York Tribune*. If there be in it any statements or assumptions of fact which I may know to be erroneous, I do not, now and here, controvert them. If there be in it any inferences which I may believe to be falsely drawn, I do not, now and here, argue against them. If there be perceptible in it an impatient and dictatorial tone, I waive it in deference to an old friend whose

heart I have always supposed to be right.

As to the policy I "seem to be pursuing," as you say, I have not meant to leave any one in doubt.

I would save the Union I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored, the nearer the Union will be "the Union as it was" If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do more whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors, and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views.

I have here stated my purpose according to my view of official duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free.

Yours,

A. LINCOLN.

TO GENERAL JOSEPH HOOKER

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, D. C.

January 26, 1863.

MAJOR-GENERAL HOOKER:

GENERAL: I have placed you at the head of the Army of the Potomac. Of course I have done this upon what appear to me to be sufficient reasons, and yet I think it best for you to know that there are some things in regard to which I am not quite satisfied with you. I believe you to be a brave and skilful soldier, which of course

I like. I also believe you do not mix politics with your profession, in which you are right. You have confidence in yourself, which is a valuable if not an indispensable quality. You are ambitious, which, within reasonable bounds, does good rather than harm, but I think that during General Burnside's command of the army you have taken counsel of your ambition and thwarted him as much as you could, in which you did a great wrong to the country and to a most meritorious and honorable brother officer. I have heard, in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the army and the government needed a dictator. Of course it was not for this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those generals who gain successes can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship. The government will support you to the utmost of its ability, which is neither more nor less than it has done and will do for all commanders. I much fear that the spirit which you have aided to infuse into the army, of criticizing their commander and withholding confidence from him, will now turn upon you. I shall assist you as far as I can to put it down. Neither you nor Napoleon, if he were alive again, could get any good out of an army while such a spirit prevails in it; and now beware of rashness. Beware of rashness, but with energy and sleepless vigilance go forward and give us victories.

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.

THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE DEDICATION OF THE NATIONAL CEMETERY, NOVEMBER 19, 1863

The main address on this occasion was delivered by Edward Everett, who soon afterward wrote to Lincoln: "I should be glad if I could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion in two hours as you did in two minutes."

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so con-

ceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.¹

TO SECRETARY STANTON

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON,
March 1, 1864.

HON. SECRETARY OF WAR.

MY DEAR SIR: A poor widow, by the name of Baird, has a son in the army, that for some offense has been sentenced to serve a long time without pay, or at most with very little pay. I do not like this punishment of withholding pay—it falls so very hard upon poor families. After he had been serving in this way for several months, at the tearful appeal of the poor mother, I made a direction that he be allowed to enlist for a new term, on the same conditions as others. She now comes, and says she cannot get it acted upon. Please do it.

Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

¹ In an antislavery address in 1850 Theodore Parker had used the phrase: "a government of all the people, by all the people, for all the people."

TO MRS. BIXBY

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON,
November 21, 1864.

5 MRS. BIXBY, Boston, Massachusetts

DEAR MADAM: I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS

March 4, 1865

30

Lincoln wrote to Thurlow Weed, March 15, 1865, that he expected this address "to wear as well—perhaps better than—anything I have produced."

35 FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN: At this second appearing to take the oath of the presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued, seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

50

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed

to an impending civil war. All dreaded it—all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war—seeking to dissolve the Union, and divide effects, by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came.

One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the Southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war; while the government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it.

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes his aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could

not be answered—that of neither has been answered fully.

The Almighty has his own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through his appointed time, he now wills to remove, and that he gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to him? Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn by the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

THE LINCOLN LITERARY LEGEND

*Time dissipates to shining ether the solid angularity of facts No anchor, no cable,
no fences, avail to keep a fact a fact. . . . Who cares what the fact was, when we have
made a constellation of it to hang in heaven an immortal sign?*

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON,
“History” (in *Essays, First Series*, 1841).

The part which Lincoln has played in literature written since his death is almost without a parallel. “Washington and Lincoln,” wrote Amy Lowell, “are the two great symbols of American life. But to deal adequately with Washington needs a historical sense, a knowledge of the eighteenth century, which few of our poets yet possess. . . . It is therefore to Lincoln that our poets turn as an embodiment of the highest form of the typical American, the fine flower and culmination of our life as a separate nation.” Some notion of the extent of the poetic literature dealing with Lincoln can be obtained from looking through three collections of poems about him: A. Dallas Williams, *The Praise of Lincoln*; Osborn H. Oldroyd, *The Poets’ Lincoln* (1915); and Mary Wright-Davis, *The Book of Lincoln* (1919), which is the best of the three. See also Carl Van Doren, “The Poetical Cult of Lincoln,” the *Nation* for May 17, 1919; Lloyd Lewis, *Myths after Lincoln* (1929); Jay B. Hubbell and John O. Beaty, *An Introduction to Poetry*, Chapter XI; and Roy P. Basler, *The Lincoln Legend* (1935). The last is a thorough study of the whole subject and includes an extensive bibliography.

The various interpretations of Lincoln found in literature resemble the various interpretations found in sculpture. (See, for example, the illustrations in Mary Wright-Davis, *The Book of Lincoln*.) Two of the best are by Augustus Saint-Gaudens and George Grey Barnard. Saint-Gaudens’s Lincoln presents an idealized, almost handsome figure. Barnard’s statue is so realistic that another sculptor, Lorado Taft, once remarked in a lecture: “That isn’t Lincoln—that is his brother who stayed on the farm.”

James Russell Lowell’s notable tribute to Lincoln is reprinted here. In other parts of this book will be found some examples of the finer prose and verse written about the great statesman. In Volume I will be found Bryant’s “Death of Lincoln,” p. 314, and Hawthorne’s description of Lincoln in 1862, p. 653. In Volume II will be found Edwin Arlington Robinson’s “The Master,” p. 603; Vachel Lindsay’s “Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight,” p. 633; and Whitman’s “O Captain! My Captain” p. 48, “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d,” p. 49, and “Abraham Lincoln” (prose) p. 75.

THE LINCOLN ----- LITERARY LEGEND

from ODE RECITED AT THE HAR- VARD COMMEMORATION

July 21, 1865

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL (1819-1891)

The paragraph dealing with Lincoln was not in the poem as read at the commemorative exercises but was added immediately afterward. "I *did* divine him [Lincoln] earlier than most men of the Brahmin caste," wrote Lowell in 1886

VI

Such was he, our Martyr-Chief,
Whom late the Nation he had led,
With ashes on her head,
Wept with the passion of an angry grief:
Forgive me, if from present things I turn
To speak what in my heart will beat and burn,
And hang my wreath on his world-honored urn.
Nature, they say, doth dote,
And cannot make a man
Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating us by rote:
For him her Old-World moulds aside she threw,
And choosing sweet clay from the breast
Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true.
How beautiful to see
Once more a shepherd of mankind indeed,
Who loved his charge, but never loved to lead;
One whose meek flock the people joyed to be,
Not lured by any cheat of birth,
But by his clear-grained human worth,
And brave old wisdom of sincerity!
They knew that outward grace is dust;
They could not choose but trust

In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill,
And supple-tempered will
That bent like perfect steel to spring again and
thrust.

5 His was no lonely mountain-peak of mind,
Thrusting to thin air o'er our cloudy bars,
A sea-mark now, now lost in vapors blind;
Broad prairie rather, genial, level-lined,
Fruitful and friendly for all human kind,
10 Yet also nigh to heaven and loved of loftiest
stars.

Nothing of Europe here,
Or, then, of Europe fronting mornward still,
Ere any names of Serf and Peer
15 Could Nature's equal scheme deface
And thwart her genial will;
Here was a type of the true elder race,
And one of Plutarch's men talked with us face
to face.

20 I praise him not; it were too late;
And some innate weakness there must be
In him who condescends to victory
Such as the Present gives, and cannot wait,
Safe in himself as in a fate.

So always firmly he:
He knew to bide his time,
And can his fame abide,
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,
Till the wise years decide.

30 Great captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour,
But at last silence comes;
These all are gone, and, standing like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame.

35 The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first American.

SONGS AND BALLADS OF THE CIVIL WAR

The poems occasioned by the Civil War are superior to those which grew out of the American Revolution. Many of them, especially the songs, were written by otherwise unknown authors. If we omit such major figures as Walt Whitman, whose *Drum-Taps* is unforgettable, the two chief poets were Henry Timrod and Henry Howard Brownell. The War quickly matured the talents of these poets, who had written nothing quite memorable before. See Brander Matthews's readable and informative essay, "The Songs of the Civil War," in his *Pen and Ink* (1888), and the two chapters on "Poets of the Civil War" in *The Cambridge History of American Literature*, by Will D. Howe and Edwin Mims.

MARYLAND, MY MARYLAND

(April, 1861)

JAMES RYDER RANDALL (1839-1908)

Randall, who was born in Baltimore, Maryland, was in April, 1861, teaching English literature and the classics in Poydras College at Pointe Coupée, in Louisiana. The poem was written after he had read in a New Orleans paper an account of the attack upon some Massachusetts troops passing through Baltimore. Years afterward Randall wrote to Brander Matthews (*Pen and Ink*, pp. 172-173): "That night I could not sleep, for my nerves were all unstrung, and I could not dismiss what I had read in the paper from my mind. About midnight I rose, lit a candle, and went to my desk. Some powerful spirit appeared to possess me, and almost involuntarily I proceeded to write the song of 'My Maryland.' I remember that the idea appeared to first take shape as music in the brain—some wild air that I cannot now recall. The whole poem was dashed off rapidly when once begun. It was not composed in cold blood, but under what may be called a conflagration of the senses, if not an inspiration of the intellect."

Two Baltimore girls, Jenny and Hetty Cary, fitted the words to "Lauriger Horatius," which they had heard sung by Burton Harrison, a student at Yale. (See the account written by Hetty Cary quoted in Brander Matthews's *Pen and Ink*, pp. 174 ff. See also Mrs. Burton Harrison's *Recollections Grave and Gay*, pp. 57-60; and James Ryder Randall, *Maryland, My Maryland and Other Poems*, 1908, Introduction.)

The despot's heel is on thy shore,
Maryland!

His touch¹ is at thy temple's door,
Maryland!

5 Avenge the patriotic gore
That flecked the streets of Baltimore,
And be the battle queen of yore,
Maryland! My Maryland!

10 Hark to a wand'ring son's appeal,
Maryland!
My mother State! to thee I kneel,
Maryland!

¹ Other versions have *torch* instead of *touch*.

SONGS AND BALLADS-----OF THE CIVIL WAR

For life and death, for woe and weal,
Thy peerless chivalry reveal,
And gird thy beauteous limbs with steel,
Maryland! My Maryland!

Thou wilt not cower in the dust,
Maryland!
Thy beaming sword shall never rust,
Maryland!

Remember Carroll's² sacred trust,
Remember Howard's warlike thrust,
And all thy slumberers with the just,
Maryland! My Maryland!

Come! 'tis the red dawn of the day,
Maryland!
Come with thy panoplied array,
Maryland!
With Ringgold's spirit for the fray,
With Watson's blood at Monterey,
With fearless Lowe and Dashing May,
Maryland! My Maryland!

Come! for thy shield is bright and strong,
Maryland!
Come! for thy dalliance does thee wrong,
Maryland!
Come to thine own heroic throng,
That stalks with liberty along,
And gives a new *Key*³ to thy song,
Maryland! My Maryland!

Dear Mother! burst the tyrant's chain,
Maryland!
Virginia should not call in vain,
Maryland!
She meets her sisters on the plain—
"Sic temper!"⁴ 'tis the proud refrain
That baffles minions back again,
Maryland! My Maryland!

I see the blush upon thy cheek,
Maryland!

But thou wast ever bravely meek,
Maryland!
But lo! there surges forth a shriek
From hill to hill from creek to creek—
5 Potomac calls to Chesapeake
Maryland! My Maryland!

Thou wilt not yield the Vandal toll,
Maryland!
10 Thou wilt not crook to his control,
Maryland!
Better the fire upon thee roll,
Better the blade, the shot, the bowl,
Than crucifixion of the soul,
15 Maryland! My Maryland!

I hear the distant thunder hum,
Maryland!
The Old Line's bugle, fife, and drum,
20 Maryland!
She is not dead, nor deaf, nor dumb—
Huzza! she spurns the Northern scum!
She breathes! she burns, she'll come! she'll
come!
25 Maryland! My Maryland!

JOHN BROWN'S BODY

(1861)

30 It is not definitely known who wrote the words
for this song. It was sung by a Massachusetts regi-
ment as it marched down Broadway in July, 1861,
on their way to the front. The tune is a Southern
camp-meeting tune which seems to have been writ-
ten by William Steffe, a South Carolinian.
35 John Brown's body lies a-mould'ring in the
grave,
John Brown's body lies a-mould'ring in the
grave,
40 John Brown's body lies a-mould'ring in the
grave,
His soul is marching on!

CHORUS

45 Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
His soul is marching on.
50 He's gone to be a soldier in the army of the
Lord!
His soul is marching on.—Cho.

² Charles Carroll of Carrollton was the last of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence to die. John Eager Howard was a Revolutionary soldier and U. S. Senator. The four Marylanders mentioned in the next stanza were all soldiers in the War with Mexico.

³ This refers to the author of "The Star-spangled Banner," another Marylander.

⁴ From the Virginia arms: *Sic semper tyrannis*; "Thus always to tyrants."

AMERICAN RENAISSANCE -----1830-1870

John Brown's knapsack is strapped upon his back.
 His soul is marching on.—Cho.

They'll hang Jeff Davis on a sour apple tree,
 As they go marching on.—Cho.

Now for the Union let's give three rousing cheers,
 5 As we go marching on.
 Hip, hip, hip, hip, Hurrah!

His pet lambs will meet him on the way,
 And they'll go marching on.—Cho.

BATTLE-HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

(December, 1861)

JULIA WARD HOWE (1819-1910)

Mrs. Howe, who wished to fit more elevated words to the tune of "John Brown's Body," wrote the poem one night after a visit to General McClellan's army. The leading idea of the poem, she stated, is "the sacredness of human liberty." The poem was first published in the *Atlantic Monthly* for February, 1862.

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.
 He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
 He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword;
 His truth is marching on.

5 I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
 They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
 I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps:
 His day is marching on.

10 I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel:
 "As ye deal with my contemnners, so with you my grace shall deal;
 Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
 Since God is marching on."

15 He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
 He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat;
 Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet!
 Our God is marching on.

20 In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
 With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me:
 As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
 While God is marching on.

STONEWALL JACKSON'S WAY

(1862)

JOHN WILLIAMSON PALMER (1825-1906)

This poem is said to have been written while the battle of Antietam, or Sharpsburg, was in progress.

Come, stack arms, men: pile on the rails;
 Stir up the camp fire bright!

No growling if the canteen fails:
 We'll make a roaring night.
 Here Shenandoah brawls along,
 There burly Blue Ridge echoes strong
 5 To swell the Brigade's rousing song
 Of Stonewall Jackson's Way.

We see him now—the queer slouched hat,
 Cocked over his eye askew:

SONGS AND BALLADS-----OF THE CIVIL WAR

The shrewd, dry smile; the speech so pat,
 So calm, so blunt, so true.
 The "Blue-light Elder" knows 'em well:
 Says he, "That's Banks:¹ he's fond of shell.
 Lord save his soul! we'll give him—": well,
 That's Stonewall Jackson's Way.

Silence! Ground arms! Kneel all! Caps off!
 Old Massa's going to pray.
 Strangle the fool that dares to scoff:
 Attention!—it's his way.
 Appealing from his native sod,
*In forma pauperis*² to God,
 "Lay bare Thine arm! Stretch forth Thy rod:
 Amen!" That's Stonewall's Way.

He's in the saddle now. Fall in!
 Steady! the whole brigade.
 Hill's³ at the ford, cut off; we'll win
 His way out, ball and blade.
 What matter if our shoes are worn?
 What matter if our feet are torn?
 Quick step! we're with him before morn:
 That's Stonewall Jackson's Way.

The sun's bright lances rout the mists
 Of morning; and, by George!
 Here's Longstreet, struggling in the lists,
 Hemmed in an ugly gorge.
 Pope⁴ and his Dutchmen! whipped before.
 "Bay'nets and grape!" hear Stonewall roar.
 Charge, Stuart!⁵ Pay off Ashby's⁶ score,
 In Stonewall Jackson's Way.

Ah, Maiden! wait, and watch, and yearn,
 For news of Stonewall's band.
 Ah, Widow! read, with eyes that burn,
 That ring upon thy hand.
 Ah, Wife! sew on, pray on, hope on!
 Thy life shall not be all forlorn.
 The foe had better ne'er been born,
 That gets in Stonewall's Way.

¹ N. P. Banks, a general in the Union army.
² As a poor man, a legal phrase.
³ A. P. Hill, a general in the Confederate army.
⁴ John Pope, a Union general, defeated by Jackson and Lee at the second battle of Bull Run.
⁵ The Confederate cavalry leader, General J. E. B. ("Jeb") Stuart.
⁶ Turner Ashby, a much loved Confederate cavalry officer killed early in the war.

LITTLE GIFFEN

(1867)

FRANCIS ORRAY TICKNOR (1822-1874)

5 The story told in this poem is a true one. Ticknor, who was a physician, took to his home, "Torch Hill," near Columbus, Georgia, Isaac Giffen, the son of an East Tennessee blacksmith Dr. and Mrs. Ticknor nursed the boy soldier back to health. They believed he was eventually killed in the fighting around Atlanta. The text of the poem is taken from an article by Ticknor's friend, Paul Hamilton Hayne, "Confederate War-songs," published in the *Southern Bivouac* for June, 1885. Hayne comments:
 15 "The copy we quote has the advantage of its author's first revision."

Out of the focal and foremost fire,
 Out of the hospital walls as dire,
 20 Smitten of grape-shot and gangrene,
 (Eighteenth battle, and *he* sixteen!)
 Spectre such as we seldom see,
 Little Giffen of Tennessee!

25 "Take him—and welcome!" the surgeon said;
 "Much your doctor can help the dead!"
 And so we *took* him and brought him where
 The balm was sweet on the summer air;
 And we laid him down on a wholesome bed—
 30 Utter Lazarus, heel to head!

Weary War with the bated breath,
 Skeleton boy against skeleton Death.
 Months of torture, how many such!
 35 Weary weeks of the stick and crutch!
 Still a glint in the steel-blue eye
 Spoke of the spirit what *wouldn't* die,

And didn't! nay, more! in death's despite
 40 The crippled skeleton *learned to write!*
 "Dear Mother" at first, of course: and then,
 "Dear Captain"—inquiring about the "men."
 Captain's answer—"Of eighty and five,
 Giffen and I are left alive!"

45 "Johnston's pressed at the front, they say!"
 Little Giffen was up and away.
 A tear, his first, as he bade good-bye,
 Dimmed the glint of his steel-blue eye;
 "I'll write, if spared." There was news of a fight,
 But none of Giffen! he did not write!

I sometimes fancy that were I king
Of the princely knights of the Golden Ring,
With the song of the minstrel in mine ear,
And the tender legend that trembles here,
I'd give the *best* on his bended knee,
The whitest-soul of my chivalry,
For little Giffen of Tennessee!

SHERIDAN'S RIDE

(1865)

THOMAS BUCHANAN READ (1822-1872)

Read, a Pennsylvania poet and painter, has been almost forgotten but for this ballad, which deals somewhat inaccurately with a historical incident described in General Philip Sheridan's *Memoirs*, Vol. II, Chap. III.

Up from the south, at break of day,
Bringing to Winchester fresh dismay,
The affrighted air with a shudder bore,
Like a herald in haste, to the chieftain's door,
The terrible grumble and rumble and roar,
Telling the battle was on once more,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

And wider still those billows of war
Thundered along the horizon's bar,
And louder yet into Winchester rolled
The roar of that red sea, uncontrolled,
Making the blood of the listener cold
As he thought of the stake in that fiery fray,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

But there is a road from Winchester town,
A good broad highway leading down;
And there, through the flush of the morning
light,
A steed as black as the steeds of night
Was seen to pass as with eagle flight,
As if he knew the terrible need:
He stretched away with his utmost speed;
Hills rose and fell, but his heart was gay,
With Sheridan fifteen miles away.

Still sprung from those swift hoofs, thundering
south,
The dust, like smoke from the cannon's mouth
Or the trail of a comet, sweeping faster and
faster,
Foreboding to traitors the doom of disaster;

The heart of the steed and the heart of the
master
Were beating like prisoners assaulting their
walls,
5 Impatient to be where the battlefield calls:
Every nerve of the charger was strained to full
play,
With Sheridan only ten miles away.

10 Under his spurning feet the road
Like an arrowy Alpine river flowed;
And the landscape sped away behind
Like an ocean flying before the wind,
And the steed, like a bark fed with furnace ire,
15 Swept on with his wild eye full of fire
But lo, he is nearing his heart's desire;
He is snuffing the smoke of the roaring fray,
With Sheridan only five miles away.

20 The first that the general saw were the groups
Of stragglers, and then the retreating troops,
What was done? what to do? a glance told him
both;
Then striking his spurs, with a terrible oath,
25 He dashed down the line 'mid a storm of huzzas,
And the wave of retreat checked its course there,
because
The sight of the master compelled it to pause.
With foam and with dust the black charger was
30 gray;
By the flash of his eye and the red nostril's play
He seemed to the whole great army to say,
"I have brought you Sheridan, all the way
From Winchester, down to save the day!"
35 Hurrah, hurrah, for Sheridan!
Hurrah, hurrah, for horse and man!
And when their statues are placed on high,
Under the dome of the Union sky
40 (The American soldiers' Temple of Fame),
There with the glorious general's name,
Be it said, in letters both bold and bright,
"Here is the steed that saved the day
By carrying Sheridan into the fight,
45 From Winchester, twenty miles away!"

THE CONQUERED BANNER

(1865)

ABRAM JOSEPH RYAN (1839-1886)

Ryan, a Catholic priest, was a chaplain in the Confederate army. His poem, "The Sword of Robert Lee," is also well known.

SONGS AND BALLADS-----OF THE CIVIL WAR

Furl that Banner, for 'us weary;
Round its staff 'tis drooping dreary:

Furl it, fold it,—it is best,
For there's not a man to wave it,
And there's not a sword to save it,
And there's not one left to lave it
In the blood which heroes gave it,
And its foes now scorn and brave it:
Furl it, hide it,—let it rest!

Take that Banner down! 'tis tattered;
Broken is its staff and shattered,
And the valiant hosts are scattered,
Over whom it floated high.
Oh, 'tis hard for us to fold it,
Hard to think there's none to hold it,
Hard that those who once unrolled it
Now must furl it with a sigh!

Furl that Banner—furl it sadly!
Once ten thousands hailed it gladly,
And ten thousands wildly, madly,
Swore it should forever wave;
Swore that focman's sword should never
Hearts like theirs entwined dis sever,
Till that flag should float forever
O'er their freedom or their grave!

Furl it! for the hands that grasped it,
And the hearts that fondly clasped it,
Cold and dead are lying low;
And that Banner—it is trailing,
While around it sounds the wailing
Of its people in their woe.

For, though conquered, they adore it,—
Love the cold, dead hands that bore it,
Weep for those who fell before it,
Pardon those who trailed and tore it;
And oh, wildly they deplore it,
Now to furl and fold it so!

Furl that Banner! True, 'tis gory,
Yet 'tis wreathed around with glory,
And 'twill live in song and story
Though its folds are in the dust!
For its fame on brightest pages,
Penned by poets and by sages,
Shall go sounding down the ages—
Furl its folds though now we must.

Furl that Banner, softly, slowly!
Treat it gently—it is holy,

For it droops above the dead.
Touch it not—unfold it never;
Let it droop there, furled forever,—
For its people's hopes are fled!

THE BLUE AND THE GRAY

(1867)

FRANCIS MILES FINCH (1827-1907)

Finch, a lawyer, who lived in Ithaca, New York, wrote this poem after reading in a newspaper that the women of Columbus, Mississippi, had impartially placed flowers on the graves of Northern as well as Southern soldiers. The poem was published in the *Atlantic Monthly* for September, 1867.

By the flow of the inland river
20 Whence the fleets of iron have fled,
Where the blades of the grave grass quiver,
Asleep are the ranks of the dead:
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day;
25 Under the one, the Blue,
Under the other, the Gray.

These in the robings of glory,
Those in the gloom of defeat,
All with the battle-blood gory,
In the dusk of eternity meet:
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day;
Under the laurel, the Blue,
35 Under the willow, the Gray.

From the silence of sorrowful hours
The desolate mourners go,
Lovingly laden with flowers
40 Alike for the friend and the foe:
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day;
Under the roses, the Blue,
Under the lilies, the Gray.

So with an equal splendor,
The morning sun rays fall,
With a touch impartially tender,
On the blossoms blooming for all:
50 Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day;
Broidered with gold, the Blue,
Mellowed with gold, the Gray.

So, when the summer calleth,
 On forest and field of grain,
 With an equal murmur falleth
 The cooling drip of the rain:
 Under the sod and the dew,
 Waiting the judgment day;
 Wet with the rain, the Blue,
 Wet with the rain, the Gray

Sadly, but not with upbraiding,
 The generous deed was done,
 In the storm of the years that are fading
 No braver battle was won:

Under the sod and the dew,
 Waiting the judgment day,
 Under the blossoms, the Blue,
 Under the garlands, the Gray

5
 No more shall the war cry sever,
 Or the winding rivers be red,
 They banish our anger forever
 When they laurel the graves of our dead!

10
 Under the sod and the dew,
 Waiting the judgment day;
 Love and tears for the Blue,
 Tears and love for the Gray.

HENRY TIMROD

1828 - 1867

*How shall we praise him save with his own song?
 The distant note, the delicate strain is there,
 Of bees and sedge, of fields dim and apart;
 Then, keen with men, affairs, loss, glory, wrong,
 A various music storms along the air,
 Sweeps past the years, and shakes us to the heart!*

—LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE, "Timrod (sonnet)," *Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1900.

Henry Timrod was the son of William Henry Timrod, a book-binder and a minor poet. The date of Timrod's birth was given by his wife and Paul Hamilton Hayne as December 8, 1829. Professor Guy A. Cardwell, Jr., however, discovered in the daybooks of the elder Timrod an entry on December 8 of the preceding year: "Henry H. Timrod born 11-12 P.M." Timrod attended one of the best schools in Charleston. Here he became acquainted with Paul Hamilton Hayne, who sat next to him and to whom he showed his first attempt at writing verse. He spent a year or more at the University of Georgia, but poor health and the lack of money kept him from completing his college course. He studied law in the office of James Louis Petigru, but disliking the law he tutored children of various South Carolina planters. As early as 1848 he began contributing verses to the *Southern Literary Messenger* under the pen-name "Aglaus." The establishment of *Russell's Magazine* in Charleston in 1857 with his friend Hayne as editor gave him another medium for his work. In 1860 the well-known firm of

Ticknor and Fields in Boston published a volume of his poems, which are disappointing to those who have read only his later poems. For it was the outbreak of the Civil War that matured Timrod's talent. His war poems found an immediate response all over the South. In 1873 Whittier wrote to Hayne. "In the year '63 I surprised my friends Emerson, Whipple & Holmes by my enthusiastic praise of one or two of his poems that I had seen." After a disastrous experience as a war correspondent, Timrod worked on the *Columbia South Carolinian* until Sherman's march through Columbia, when the city was burned. The closing years of Timrod's life are among the saddest in literary annals. His only son died; he could find only temporary employment, and he was suffering from tuberculosis. He had others than his immediate family to support, and it was only through the sale of furniture and silver that they managed to live. Timrod did not die of starvation, but the lack of sufficient food was one of the causes of his early death.

Hayne, always loyal to his more gifted friend, brought out a collected edition of Timrod's poems with a brief memoir in 1873. The Timrod Memorial Association published another in 1899 with a few additional poems. In 1942 Professor Cardwell published *The Uncollected Poems of Henry Timrod*, and in the same year Professor Edd Winfield Parks brought out *The Essays of Henry Timrod*, which reveal Timrod as a critic of importance. The best of his essays, "A Theory of Poetry," suggests that Wordsworth influenced Timrod more than any other writer. Jay B. Hubbell's *The Last Years of Henry Timrod* (1941) contains the extant letters of Timrod to Hayne and letters about Timrod written by Hayne, Simms, Whittier, and others. There is no full-length biography of the poet, and there is no complete edition of his writings. Other references are given in Lewis Leary (ed.), *Articles on American Literature . . .* (1947).

THE COTTON BOLL

(1861)

While I recline
At ease beneath
This immemorial pine,
Small sphere!
(By dusky fingers brought this morning here
And shown with boastful smiles),
I turn thy cloven sheath,
Through which the soft white fibres peer,
That, with their gossamer bands,
Unite, like love, the sea-divided lands,
And slowly, thread by thread,
Draw forth the folded strands,
Than which the trembling line,
By whose frail help yon startled spider fled
Down the tall spear-grass from his swinging bed,
Is scarce more fine;

And as the tangled skein
Unravels in my hands,
Betwixt me and the noonday light,
A veil seems lifted, and for miles and miles
5 The landscape broadens on my sight,
As, in the little boll, there lurked a spell
Like that which, in the ocean shell,
With mystic sound,
Breaks down the narrow walls that hem us
10 round,
And turns some city lane
Into the restless main,
With all his capes and isles!
15 Yonder bird,
Which floats, as if at rest,
In those blue tracts above the thunder, where
No vapors cloud the stainless air,
And never sound is heard,

Unless at such rare time
 When, from the City of the Blest,
 Rings down some golden chime,
 Sees not from his high place
 So vast a cirque of summer space
 As widens round me in one mighty field,
 Which, rimmed by seas and sands,
 Doth hail its earliest daylight in the beams
 Of gray Atlantic dawns,
 And, broad as realms made up of many lands,
 Is lost afar
 Behind the crimson hills and purple lawns
 Of sunset, among plains which roll their streams
 Against the Evening Star!
 And lo!
 To the remotest point of sight,
 Although I gaze upon no waste of snow,
 The endless field is white;
 And the whole landscape glows,
 For many a shining league away,
 With such accumulated light
 As Polar lands would flash beneath a tropic
 day!
 Nor lack there (for the vision grows,
 And the small charm within my hands—
 More potent even than the fabled one,
 Which oped whatever golden mystery
 Lay hid in fairy wood or magic vale,
 The curious ointment of the Arabian tale—
 Beyond all mortal sense
 Doth stretch my sight's horizon, and I see,
 Beneath its simple influence,
 As if with Uriel's crown,
 I stood in some great temple of the Sun,
 And looked, as Uriel, down!)
 Nor lack there pastures rich and fields all green
 With all the common gifts of God,
 For temperate airs and torrid sheen
 Weave Edens of the sod;
 Through lands which look one sea of billowy
 gold
 Broad rivers wind their devious ways;
 A hundred isles in their embraces fold
 A hundred luminous bays;
 And through yon purple haze
 Vast mountains lift their plumèd peaks cloud-
 crowned;
 And, save where up their sides the ploughman
 creeps,
 An unhewn forest girds them grandly round,
 In whose dark shades a future navy sleeps!
 Ye Stars, which, though unseen, yet with me
 gaze

Upon this loveliest fragment of the earth!
 Thou Sun, that kindlest all thy gentlest rays
 Above it, as to light a favorite hearth!
 Ye Clouds, that in your temples in the West
 5 See nothing brighter than its humblest flowers!
 And you, ye Winds, that on the ocean's breast
 Are kissed to coolness ere ye reach its bowers!
 Bear witness with me in my song of praise,
 And tell the world that, since the world began,
 10 No fairer land hath fired a poet's lays,
 Or given a home to man!

But these are charms already widely blown!
 His be the meed whose pencil's trace
 15 Hath touched our very swamps with grace,
 And round whose tuneful way
 All Southern laurels bloom,
 The Poet of "The Woodlands,"¹ unto whom
 Alike are known
 20 The flute's low breathing and the trumpet's
 tone,
 And the soft west wind's sighs;
 But who shall utter all the debt,
 O Land wherein all powers are met
 25 That bind a people's heart,
 The world doth owe thee at this day,
 And which it never can repay,
 Yet scarcely deigns to own!
 Where sleeps the poet who shall fitly sing
 30 The source wherefrom doth spring
 That mighty commerce which, confined
 To the mean channels of no selfish mart,
 Goes out to every shore
 Of this broad earth, and throngs the sea with
 35 ships
 That bear no thunders, hushes hungry lips
 In alien lands;
 Joins with a delicate web remotest strands;
 And gladdening rich and poor,
 40 Doth gild Parisian domes,
 Or feed the cottage-smoke of English homes
 And only bounds its blessings by mankind!
 In offices like these, thy mission lies,
 My Country! and it shall not end
 45 As long as rain shall fall and Heaven bend
 In blue above thee; though thy foes be hard
 And cruel as their weapons, it shall guard
 Thy hearth-stones as a bulwark; make thee great
 In white and bloodless state;
 50 And haply, as the years increase—
 Still working through its humbler reach

¹ Simms.

With that large wisdom which the ages teach—
 Revive the half-dead dream of universal peace!
 As men who labor in that mine
 Of Cornwall, hollowed out beneath the bed
 Of ocean, when a storm rolls overhead,
 Hear the dull booming of the world of brine
 Above them, and a mighty muffled roar
 Of winds and waters, yet toil calmly on,
 And split the rock, and pile the massive ore,
 Or carve a niche, or shape the archèd roof;
 So I, as calmly, weave my woof
 Of song, chanting the days to come,
 Unsilenced, though the quiet summer air
 Stirs with the bruit of battles, and each dawn
 Wakes from its starry silence to the hum
 Of many gathering armies. Still,
 In that we sometimes hear,
 Upon the Northern winds, the voice of woe
 Not wholly drowned in triumph, though I know
 The end must crown us, and a few brief years
 Dry all our tears,
 I may not sing too gladly. To Thy will
 Resigned, O Lord! we cannot all forget
 That there is much even Victory must regret.
 And, therefore, not too long
 From the great burthen of our country's wrong
 Delay our just release!
 And, if it may be, save
 These sacred fields of peace
 From stain of patriot or of hostile blood!
 Oh, help us, Lord! to roll the crimson flood
 Back on its course, and while our banners wing
 Northward, strike with us! till the Goth shall
 cling
 To his own blasted altar-stones, and crave
 Mercy; and we shall grant it, and dictate
 The lenient future of his fate
 There, where some rotting ships and crumbling
 quays
 Shall one day mark the Port which ruled the
 Western seas.

CAROLINA

(1862)

I

The despot treads thy sacred sands,
 Thy pines give shelter to his bands,
 Thy sons stand by with idle hands,
 Carolina!
 He breathes at ease thy airs of balm,

He scorns the lances of thy palm;
 Oh! who shall break thy craven calm,
 Carolina!

Thy ancient fame is growing dim,
 5 A spot is on thy garment's rim;
 Give to the winds thy battle hymn,
 Carolina!

II

10 Call on thy children of the hill,
 Wake swamp and river, coast and rill,
 Rouse all thy strength and all thy skill,
 Carolina!
 Cite wealth and science, trade and art,
 15 Touch with thy fire the cautious mart,
 And pour thee through the people's heart,
 Carolina!
 Till even the coward spurns his fears,
 And all thy fields and fens and meres
 20 Shall bristle like thy palm with spears,
 Carolina!

III

Hold up the glories of thy dead;
 25 Say how thy elder children bled,
 And point to Eutaw's battle-bed,
 Carolina!
 Tell how the patriot's soul was tried,
 And what his dauntless breast defied;
 30 How Rutledge ruled and Laurens died,
 Carolina!
 Cry! till thy summons, heard at last,
 Shall fall like Marion's bugle-blast
 Re-echoed from the haunted Past,
 35 Carolina!

IV

I hear a murmur as of waves
 That grope their way through sunless caves,
 Like bodies struggling in their graves,
 Carolina!
 And now it deepens; slow and grand
 It swells, as, rolling to the land,
 An ocean broke upon thy strand,
 45 Carolina!
 Shout! let it reach the startled Huns!
 And roar with all thy festal guns!
 It is the answer of thy sons,
 Carolina!

V

They will not wait to hear thee call;
 From Sachem's Head to Sumter's wall

Resounds the voice of hut and hall,
Carolinal!

No! thou hast not a stain, they say,
Or none save what the battle-day
Shall wash in seas of blood away,

Carolinal!
Thy skirts indeed the foe may part,
Thy robe be pierced with sword and dart,
They shall not touch thy noble heart,
Carolinal!

VI

Ere thou shalt own the tyrant's thrall
Ten times ten thousand men must fall;
Thy corpse may hearken to his call,
Carolinal!

When, by thy bier, in mournful throngs
The women chant thy mortal wrongs,
'Twill be their own funereal songs,
Carolinal!

From thy dead breast by ruffians trod
No helpless child shall look to God;
All shall be safe beneath thy sod,
Carolinal!

VII

Girt with such wills to do and bear,
Assured in right, and mailed in prayer,
Thou wilt not bow thee to despair,
Carolinal!

Throw thy bold banner to the breeze!
Front with thy ranks the threatening seas
Like thine own proud armorial trees,
Carolinal!

Fling down thy gauntlet to the Huns,
And roar the challenge from thy guns;
Then leave the future to thy sons,
Carolinal!

CHARLESTON

(1862)

Calm as that second summer which precedes
The first fall of the snow,
In the broad sunlight of heroic deeds
The City bides the foe.

As yet, behind their ramparts stern and proud,
Her bolted thunders sleep—
Dark Sumter, like a battlemented cloud,
Looms o'er the solemn deep.

No Calpe frowns from lofty cliff or scar
To guard the holy strand;
But Moultrie holds in leash her dogs of war
Above the level sand.

5

And down the dunes a thousand guns lie
couched

Unseen beside the flood—
Like tigers in some Orient jungle crouched

10

That wait and watch for blood.

Meanwhile, through streets still echoing with
trade,

Walk grave and thoughtful men

15 Whose hands may one day wield the patriot's
blade

As lightly as the pen.

And maidens with such eyes as would grow dim

20

Over a bleeding hound

Seem each one to have caught the strength of
him

Whose sword she sadly bound.

25

Thus girt without and garrisoned at home,
Day patient following day,

Old Charleston looks from roof and spire and
dome

Across her tranquil bay.

30

Ships, through a hundred foes, from Saxon
lands

And spicy Indian ports

Bring Saxon steel and iron to her hands

35

And Summer to her courts.

But still, along yon dim Atlantic line,

The only hostile smoke

Creeps like a harmless mist above the brine

40

From some frail, floating oak.

Shall the Spring dawn, and she still clad in
smiles

And with an unscathed brow,

45

Rest in the strong arms of her palm-crowned
isles

As fair and free as now?

We know not; in the temple of the Fates

50

God has inscribed her doom;

And, all untroubled in her faith, she waits
The triumph or the tomb.

SPRING

(1863)

Spring, with that nameless pathos in the air
Which dwells with all things fair,
Spring, with her golden suns and silver rain,
Is with us once again.

Out in the lonely woods the jasmine burns
Its fragrant lamps, and turns
Into a royal court with green festoons
The banks of dark lagoons.

In the deep heart of every forest tree
The blood is all aglee,
And there's a look about the leafless bowers
As if they dreamed of flowers.

Yet still on every side we trace the hand
Of Winter in the land,
Save where the maple reddens on the lawn,
Flushed by the season's dawn;

Or where, like those strange semblances we find
That age to childhood bind,
The elm puts on, as if in Nature's scorn,
The brown of Autumn corn.

As yet the turf is dark, although you know
That, not a span below,
A thousand germs are groping through the
gloom,
And soon will burst their tomb.

Already, here and there, on frailest stems
Appear some azure gems,
Small as might deck, upon a gala day,
The forehead of a fay.

In gardens you may note amid the dearth
The crocus breaking earth;
And near the snowdrop's tender white and
green,
The violet in its screen.

But many gleams and shadows need must pass
Along the budding grass,
And weeks go by, before the enamored South
Shall kiss the rose's mouth.

Still there's a sense of blossoms yet unborn
In the sweet airs of morn;

One almost looks to see the very street
Grow purple at his feet.

At times a fragrant breeze comes floating by,
5 And brings, you know not why,
A feeling as when eager crowds await
Before a palace gate

Some wondrous pageant; and you scarce would
10 start,
If from a beech's heart,
A blue-eyed Dryad, stepping forth, should say,
"Behold me! I am May!"

Ah! who would couple thoughts of war and
15 crime
With such a blessed time!
Who in the west wind's aromatic breath
Could hear the call of Death!

20 Yet not more surely shall the Spring awake
The voice of wood and brake,
Then she shall rouse, for all her tranquil
charms,
25 A million men to arms.

There shall be deeper hues upon her plains
Than all her sunlit rains,
And every gladdening influence around,
30 Can summon from the ground.

Oh! standing on this desecrated mould,
Methinks that I behold,
Lifting her bloody daisies up to God,
35 Spring kneeling on the sod,

And calling, with the voice of all her rills,
Upon the ancient hills
To fall and crush the tyrants and the slaves
40 Who turn her meads to graves.

THE UNKNOWN DEAD

(1863)

45 The rain is plashing on my sill,
But all the winds of Heaven are still;
And so it falls with that dull sound
Which thrills us in the church-yard ground,
50 When the first spadeful drops like lead
Upon the coffin of the dead.
Beyond my streaming window-pane,

I cannot see the neighboring vane,
 Yet from its old familiar tower
 The bell comes, muffled, through the shower.
 What strange and unsuspected link
 Of feeling touched, has made me think—
 While with a vacant soul and eye
 I watch that gray and stony sky—
 Of nameless graves on battle-plains
 Washed by a single winter's rains,
 Where, some beneath Virginian hills,
 And some by green Atlantic rills,
 Some by the waters of the West,
 A myriad unknown heroes rest.
 Ah! not the chiefs, who, dying, see
 Their flags in front of victory,
 Or, at their life-blood's noble cost
 Pay for a battle nobly lost,
 Claim from their monumental beds
 The bitterest tears a nation sheds
 Beneath yon lonely mound—the spot
 By all save some fond few forgot—
 Lie the true martyrs of the fight
 Which strikes for freedom and for right.
 Of them, their patriot zeal and pride,
 The lofty faith that with them died,
 No grateful page shall farther tell
 Than that so many bravely fell;
 And we can only dimly guess
 What worlds of all this world's distress,
 What utter woe, despair, and dearth,
 Their fate has brought to many a hearth.
 Just such a sky as this should weep
 Above them, always, where they sleep;
 Yet, haply, at this very hour,
 Their graves are like a lover's bower;
 And Nature's self, with eyes unwet,
 Oblivious of the crimson debt
 To which she owes her April grace,
 Laughs gayly o'er their burial-place.

ODE

(1866)

This poem was written to be sung at the memorial exercises held in the Magnolia Cemetery in Charleston on June 16, 1866. The "Ode" is usually dated a year later, but Professor G. P. Voigt discovered in the Charleston *Daily Courier* both the error in the date of the poem and a revised version of the poem not contained in any edition of Timrod's poems. (See his article, "New Light on Timrod's 'Memorial Ode,'" *American Literature*, IV, 395-396, January, 1933.) Compare William Collins's "Ode," beginning:

*"How sleep the brave, who sink to rest
 By all their country's wishes blessed!"*

Sleep sweetly in your humble graves,
 Sleep, martyrs of a fallen cause;
 Though yet no marble column craves
 The pilgrim here to pause.
 In seeds of laurels in the earth,
 The garlands of your fame are sown;
 And somewhere, waiting for its birth,
 The shaft is in the stone!
 Meanwhile, your sisters for the years
 Which hold in trust your storied tombs,
 Bring all they now can give you—tears,
 And these memorial blooms.
 Small tributes, but your shades will smile
 As proudly on those wreaths today,
 As when some cannon-moulded pile
 Shall overlook this Bay.
 Stoop, angels, hither from the skies!
 There is no holier spot of ground
 Than where defeated valor lies,
 By mourning beauty crowned!

PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE

1830 - 1886

Hayne was a native of Charleston, South Carolina, and an intimate friend of Simms and Timrod. Unlike these two men, he came of an excellent Charleston family. His father, an officer in the U. S. Navy, died early, leaving the young poet to the care of his mother and his uncle, Senator Robert Y. Hayne, Webster's opponent in the famous debate of 1830. Hayne graduated from the College of Charleston and studied law, but soon gave it up to become one of the few professional men of letters in the Old South. He was one of the editors of the *Southern Literary Gazette* and the principal editor of *Russell's Magazine*, founded in the same year (1857) as the *Atlantic Monthly*. Before the outbreak of the Civil War he had published three volumes of poems (1855, 1857, 1859). Toward the end of the war—having lost practically everything he possessed—he settled at "Copse Hill" near Augusta, Georgia. Here in the pine barrens he spent the remainder of his life. Under almost all imaginable difficulties he devoted himself to literature, eking out a meager living with his pen. (Compare his life with that of Emily Dickinson, whose dates are the same as his.) Hayne in his later years carried on a wide correspondence with many authors in England and the North as well as in the South, of which he was now a recognized literary leader. Among his friends were Timrod, whose *Poems* (1873) he edited, Francis Orray Ticknor, Margaret Junkin Preston, Sidney Lanier, George Henry Boker, and Richard Henry Stoddard. Mrs. Preston wrote the introduction for Hayne's most nearly complete volume, published in 1882. See also W. P. Trent, *William Gilmore Simms* (1892); *Letters of Sidney Lanier* (1899); and Hayne's "Ante-bellum Charleston," three articles published in the *Southern Bivouac* in 1885. Hayne's private library and manuscripts are in the Duke University Library. See also D. M. McKeithan (ed.), *A Collection of Hayne Letters* (1944); Charles Duffy (ed.), *The Correspondence of Bayard Taylor and Paul Hamilton Hayne* (1945); and Max Griffin, "Whittier and Hayne: A Record of Friendship," *American Literature*, XIX, 41-58 (March, 1947).

MY STUDY

(1857)

This is my world! within these narrow walls,
I own a princely service; the hot care
And tumult of our frenzied life are here

But as a ghost, and echo; what befalls
In the far mart to me is less than naught;
I walk the fields of quiet Arcadies,
And wander by the brink of hoary seas,
5 Calmed to the tendance of untroubled thought:
Or if a livelier humor should enhance

The slow-timed pulse, 'tis not for present strife,
The sordid zeal with which our age is rife,
Its mammon conflicts crowned by fraud or
chance,
But gleamings of the lost, heroic life,
Flashed through the gorgeous vistas of romance.

THE COTTAGE ON THE HILL

(1872)

On a steep hillside, to all airs that blow,
Open, and open to the varying sky,
Our cottage homestead, smiling tranquilly,
Catches morn's earliest and eve's latest glow; 15
Here, far from worldly strife, and pompous
show,
The peaceful seasons glide serenely by,
Fulfil their missions, and as calmly die,
As waves on quiet shores when winds are low. 20
Fields, lonely paths, the one small glimmering
rill
That twinkles like a wood-fay's mirthful eye,
Under moist bay-leaves, clouds fantastical
That float and change at the light breeze's 25
will,—
To me, thus lapped in sylvan luxury,
Are more than death of kings, or empires' fall.

SOUTH CAROLINA TO THE STATES OF THE NORTH¹

ESPECIALLY TO THOSE THAT FORMED A PART
OF THE ORIGINAL THIRTEEN

(1882)

I lift these hands with iron fetters banded:
Beneath the scornful sunlight and cold stars 40
I rear my once imperial forehead branded
By alien shame's immedicable scars;
Like some pale captive, shunned by all the
nations,

¹ This Poem was composed at a period when it seemed as if all the horrors of misgovernment, so graphically depicted by Pike in his "*Prostrate State*," would be perpetuated in South Carolina.

It was a significant and terrible epoch; a time American statesmen would do well to remember occasionally as a warning against patchwork political re-constructions. (Author's note.)

The poem was dedicated to Wade Hampton.

I crouch unpitied, quivering and apart—
Laden with countless woes and desolations,
The life-blood freezing round a broken heart!

5 About my feet, splashed red with blood of
slaughters,
My children gathering in wild, mournful
throngs;
Despairing sons, frail infants, stricken daugh-
ters, 10

Rehearse the awful burden of their wrongs;
Vain is their cry, and worse than vain their
pleading:

I turn from stormy breasts, from yearning
eyes, 15
To mark where Freedom's outraged form re-
ceding,
Wanes in chill shadow down the midnight
skies!

I wooed her once in wild tempestuous places,
The purple vintage of my soul outpoured,
To win and keep her unrestrained embraces,
What time the olive-crown o'ertopped the
sword; 20

O! northmen, with your gallant heroes blend-
ing,

Mine, in old years, for this sweet goddess
died;

30 But now—ah! shame, all other shame transcend-
ing!

Your pitiless hands have torn her from my
side.

35 *What! 'tis a tyrant-party's treacherous action—
Your hand is clean, your conscience clear, ye
sigh;*

Ay! but ere now your sires had throttled faction,
Or, pealed o'er half the world their battle-
cry;

Its voice outrung from solemn mountain-passes
Swept by wild storm-winds of the Atlantic
strand,

45 To where the swart Sierras' sullen grasses,
Droop in low languors of the sunset-land!

Never, since earthly States began their story,
Hath any suffered, bided, borne like me:

At last, recalling all mine ancient glory,

50 I vowed my fettered commonwealth to free:
Even at the thought, beside the prostrate
column

Of chartered rights, which blasted lay and
dim—
Uprose my noblest son with purpose solemn,
While, host on host, his brethren followed
*him.*²

Wrong, grasped by *truth*, arraigned by *law*,
(whose sober
Majestic mandates rule o'er change and
time)—
Smit by the *ballot*, like some flushed October,
Reeled in the autumn rankness of his crime;
Struck, tortured, pierced—but not a blow re-
turning.
The steadfast phalanx of my honored braves
Planted their bloodless flag where sunrise burn-
ing,
Flashed a new splendor o'er our martyrs'
graves!

What then? O, sister States! what welcome omen
Of love and concord crossed our brightening
blue,
The foes we vanquished, are they not *your* foe-
men,
Our laws upheld, your sacred safeguards, too?
Yet scarce had victory crowned our grand en-
deavor,
And peace crept out from shadowy glooms
remote—
Than—as if bared to blast all hope forever,
Your tyrant's sword shone glittering at my
throat!

Once more my bursting chains were reunited,
Once more barbarian plaudits wildly rung
O'er the last promise of deliverance blighted,
The prostrate purpose, and the palsied
tongue:
Ah! faithless sisters, 'neath my swift undoing,
Peers the black presage of your wrath to
come;

² Wade Hampton.

Above your heads are signal clouds of ruin,
Whose lightnings flash, whose thunders are
not dumb!

5 There towers a judgment-seat beyond our see-
ing;
There lives a Judge, whom none can bribe
or blind;
Before whose dread decree, your spirit fleeing,
10 May reap the whirlwind, having sown the
wind:
I, in that day of justice, fierce and torrid,
When blood—*your* blood—outpours like poi-
soned wine,
15 *Pointing to these chained limbs, thus blasted
forehead,*
May mock your ruin, as ye mocked at mine!

20

POVERTY

(1882)

25

Once I beheld thee, a lithe mountain maid,
Embrowned by wholesome toils in lusty air;
Whose clear blood, nurtured by strong, primi-
tive cheer,
30 Through Amazonian veins, flowed unafraid.
Broad-breasted, pearly-teethed, thy pure breath
strayed,
Sweet as deep-uddered kine's curled in the rare
Bright spaces of thy lofty atmosphere,
35 O'er some rude cottage in a fir-grown glade.
Now, of each brave ideal virtue stripped,
O Poverty! I behold thee as thou art,
A ruthless hag, the image of woeful dearth
Or brute despair, gnawing its own starved heart.
40 Thou ravening wretch! fierce-eyed and monster-
lipped,
Why scourge forevermore God's beauteous
earth?

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

1807 - 1882

*"Non vox sed votum,
Non chorda sed cor,
Non clamor sed amor,
Clangit in aure Dei.*

*"Not voice but vow,
Not harp-string but heart-string,
Not loudness but love,
Sounds in the ear of God."¹*

Longfellow, the most popular poet of his generation, was born in Portland, Maine, on February 27, 1807. Boyhood impressions of Portland appear in one of his best poems, "My Lost Youth." Longfellow was well born and well bred. Like Bryant, he was a descendant of John Alden and Priscilla Mullins, who asked the question, "Why don't you speak for yourself, John?" His father, a lawyer and a graduate of Harvard, would probably have sent his son to that college but for the fact that he had become a trustee of Bowdoin College, to which he naturally sent his son. There Longfellow was much more the model student than his classmate, Nathaniel Hawthorne. Longfellow had early shown a keen interest in literature and had written verses, some of which show the influence of Bryant. Having made up his mind to a literary career, while in college he wrote his father the following significant letter in regard to his wishes:

December 5, 1824

"I take this early opportunity to write to you, because I wish to know fully your inclination with regard to the profession I am to pursue when I leave college.

"For my part, I have already hinted to you what would best please me. I want to spend one year at Cambridge [Harvard] for the purpose of reading history, and of becoming familiar with the best authors in polite literature; whilst at the same time I can be acquiring a knowledge of the Italian language, without an acquaintance with which I shall be shut out from one of the most beautiful departments of letters. The French I mean to understand pretty thoroughly before I leave

¹ From a book-plate used by Longfellow. The lines are anonymous.

college. After leaving Cambridge, I would attach myself to some literary periodical publication, by which I could maintain myself and still enjoy the advantages of reading. Now, I do not think that there is anything visionary or chimerical in my plan thus far. The fact is—and I will not disguise it in the least, for I think I ought not—the fact is, I most eagerly aspire after future eminence in literature; my whole soul burns most ardently for it, and every earthly thought centres in it. There may be something visionary in *this*, but I flatter myself that I have prudence enough to keep my enthusiasm from defeating its own object by too great haste. Surely, there never was a better opportunity offered for the exertion of literary talent in our own country than is now offered. To be sure, most of our literary men thus far have not been professedly so, until they have studied and entered the practice of Theology, Law, or Medicine. But this is evidently lost time. . . .

“Whether Nature has given me any capacity for knowledge or not, she has at any rate given me a very strong predilection for literary pursuits, and I am almost confident in believing, that, if I can ever rise in the world, it must be by the exercise of my talent in the wide field of literature. With such a belief, I must say that I am unwilling to engage in the study of law.

“Here, then, seems to be the starting point: and I think it best for me to float out into the world upon that tide and in that channel which will the soonest bring me to my destined port, and not to struggle against both wind and tide, and by attempting what is impossible lose everything.”

Here is a portion of the father’s reply:

“The subject of your first letter is one of deep interest and demands great consideration. A literary life, to one who has the means of support, must be very pleasant. But there is not wealth enough in this country to afford encouragement to merely literary men. And as you have not had the fortune (I will not say whether good or ill) to be born rich, you must adopt a profession which will afford you subsistence as well as reputation. . . . With regard to your spending a year at Cambridge, I have always thought it might be beneficial; and if my health should not be impaired and my finances should allow, I should be very happy to gratify you.”

The young poet, fully determined to “be eminent in something,” apparently made up his mind to become a lawyer. “I can be a lawyer,” he wrote his father. “This will support my real existence, literature an *ideal* one.” Fate, however, kept Longfellow out of the legal profession into which drifted so many of our writers—among them, Irving, Bryant, Lowell, Boker, and Lanier. At the 1825 commencement the trustees of Bowdoin College voted to establish a professorship of modern languages. The study of modern languages—a field in which Longfellow was to be an influential pioneer—was just beginning. At Harvard George Ticknor held the Smith Professorship of Modern Languages, to which Longfellow was by and by to succeed. How the Bowdoin College authorities came to select for the new position the eighteen-year-old youth who had just graduated fourth in his class may be explained by the story that at the Senior Examination Benjamin Orr, a trustee, “had been much struck by Longfellow’s elegant translation of an Ode of Horace, . . . and warmly presented his name for the new chair.” And so Longfellow went to Europe to prepare himself for his new profession, which was to have a profound influence on his literary career.

AMERICAN RENAISSANCE-----1830-1870

For Longfellow, as for Irving, Europe rather than America was the abode of romance. And yet, romantic pilgrim though he was, Longfellow acquired a command of French, Spanish, and Italian, and learned some German. He wrote to his father in regard to his accomplishment on December 19, 1828:

"I know you cannot be dissatisfied with the progress I have made in my studies. I speak honestly, not boastingly. With the French and Spanish languages I am familiarly conversant, so as to speak them correctly, and write them with as much ease and fluency as I do the English. The Portuguese I read without difficulty. And with regard to my proficiency in the Italian, I have only to say that all at the hotel where I lodge took me for an Italian until I told them I was an American."

During his three-year stay in Europe, Longfellow planned a volume of prose "Sketches of New England Life," and although he never completed these, he made a beginning on *Outre Mer*, which is a kind of European *Sketch Book*. He had long admired Irving, whom he finally met in Spain and found to possess the same charm as his books. What Longfellow saw of European universities gave him a new perspective upon the New England colleges. The future instructor wrote to his father:

"What has hitherto been the idea of an University with us? The answer is a simple one:—Two or three large brick buildings—with a chapel, and a President to pray in it! . . . when there is an American University, instead of seeing a new College ushered into existence every winter by a petition to the Legislature for funds to put up a parcel of Woolen-Factory buildings for students—we should see capital better employed in enriching the libraries of the country and making them *public!*—and instead of seeing the youth of our country chained together like galley slaves and 'scourged to their dungeon'—as it were—our eyes would be cheered by the grateful spectacle of mind throwing its fetters off—and education free from its chains and shackles."

Before his return to Bowdoin, Longfellow had the mortification of having the college authorities offer him not the \$1,000 professorship which he had been led to expect but a \$600 "tutorship." He showed the proper spirit in fighting for his rights. He was given the rank he had been promised, and his salary was raised to \$800, with an additional \$100 for serving as college librarian. The college authorities had selected a better instructor than they knew; for, like Ticknor, Bancroft, Everett, and others who had gone to Europe before him, Longfellow came back with a determination to raise the level of the work in the American college. Finding no suitable textbooks, he proceeded to prepare some for his own classes. In a letter to his friend George W. Greene, the young instructor gives us a glimpse of his daily routine:

"I rise at six in the morning, and hear a French recitation of Sophomores immediately. At seven I breakfast, and am then master of my time till eleven, when I hear a Spanish lesson of Juniors. After that I take a lunch; and at twelve I go into the library, where I remain till one. I am then at leisure for the afternoon till five, when I have a French recitation of Juniors. At six, I take coffee; then walk and visit friends till nine; study till twelve, and sleep till six, when I begin the same round again. Such is the daily routine of my life. The intervals of college duty I fill up with my own studies. Last term I was publishing text-books for the use of my pupils, in whom I take a deep interest. This term I am writing a course

of lectures on French, Spanish, and Italian literature. I shall commence lecturing to the two upper classes in a few days. You see, I lead a very sober, jog-trot kind of life. . . .

"I am delighted more and more with the profession I have embraced."

For an account of Longfellow's surprisingly modern methods of teaching a foreign language, we must turn to a later period in his life. Edward Everett Hale, author of "The Man without a Country," has described Longfellow's method of teaching his beginners' class in German at Harvard:

"We sat round a mahogany table, which was reported to be meant for the dinners of the Fellows; and the whole affair had the aspect of a friendly gathering in a private house, in which the study of German was the amusement of the occasion. He began with familiar ballads,—read them to us, and made us read them to him. Of course, we soon committed them to memory without meaning to, and I think this was probably part of his theory. . . . We all knew he was a poet, and were proud to have him in the college, but at the same time we respected him as a man of affairs."

While still abroad, Longfellow had written to his sister Elizabeth, "My poetic career is finished." He began to write verse again in 1832, although his first volume of poems, *Voices of the Night*, did not appear until 1839. In 1833 he had published his *Outre Mer: A Pilgrimage beyond the Sea* in separate numbers like *The Sketch Book*.

A little-known short story by Longfellow, "The Wondrous Tale of a Little Man in Gosling Green" (see *American Literature*, III, 136-148, May, 1931), leads one to believe that the small-town atmosphere of Brunswick irritated the cosmopolitan young instructor. He was much pleased when Harvard offered him the Smith Professorship at \$1500 a year, with the privilege of spending a year or more in Europe before beginning his teaching. On this second stay in Europe Longfellow gave most of his attention to the Germanic languages and literatures. His young wife—he had married Mary Potter in 1831—died in Rotterdam in November, 1835. He began work at Harvard in the fall of 1836. In 1843 he married the cultured and charming Frances Appleton, whom he had met first in Europe and to whom he long paid court in vain.

The young poet was something of a dandy in dress, and he was fond of social life. "There is such a social spirit here and in Boston," he writes to his father in 1837, "that I seldom see a book by candle-light. . . . People here are too agreeable to let a man kill himself with study." Even Boston struck him as provincial. He wrote some months later to his father: "Boston is only a great village. The tyranny of public opinion there surpasses belief." In 1853 he wrote in his journal: "Dined in town. A pleasant enough dinner; but my ways of thinking are so different from those of most of the Bostonians that there is not much satisfaction in talking with them. ——— himself is an exception. He has a liberal, catholic mind, and does not speak as if he were the pope." In another mood he writes, "After all, Cambridge delighteth my heart exceedingly." And well it might when in a single afternoon's walk he could meet four men like those mentioned in a letter to Samuel Ward on March 11, 1839:

"Walking in the pleasant sunset, I met Richard Dana [author of *Two Years before the Mast*], and shortly afterward his father, the old essayist, author of *The Idle Man*; a courteous gentleman, who has somewhat outlived his fame, and to

whom the present generation does not pay the honor which is due to him. We had some pleasant chat about the British essayists, and the charm that still lingers round their memory. As we walked we met Lowell and Norton; and I felt that we belonged to the 'Old-Guard.' ”

Gradually as his poems became more popular, Longfellow's interest shifted more and more from teaching to creative writing; and he came to feel that teaching interfered with his real vocation. He finally gave up his professorship in 1854. Here are two of numerous similar passages in his journal written before his retirement:

“I could live very happily here if I could chain myself down to college duties and be nothing but a professor. I should then have work enough and recreation enough. But I am too restless for this. What should I be at fifty? A fat mill-horse, grinding round with blinkers on.”

“I seriously think of resigning my professorship. My time is so fully taken up by its lectures and other duties that I have none left for writing. Then, my eyes are suffering, and the years are precious. And if I wish to do anything in literature it must be done now. Few men have written good poetry after fifty.”

Longfellow's first volume of poems, *Voices of the Night* (1839), contains some of his most popular poems—which are in some instances also his worst. In “A Psalm of Life” we find him confusing poetry with preaching. In “Footsteps of Angels” we find sentimentality instead of deep feeling. His “Hymn to the Night,” however, is one of the finest lyrics he ever wrote. The next volume, *Ballads and Other Poems* (1841), contains two sentimental favorites, “Maidenhood” and “The Wreck of the Hesperus,” and “The Village Blacksmith,” tagged with an irrelevant moral; but it also contains “The Skeleton in Armor,” which is one of his best ballads. Longfellow was an excellent narrative poet, more consistently good than Whittier. He wrote to his friend Greene on January 2, 1840:

“I have broken ground in a new field; namely, ballads; . . . The *national ballad* is a virgin soil here in New England, and there are great materials. Besides, I have a great notion of working upon the *people's* feelings. I am going to have it printed on a sheet, with a coarse picture on it. I desire a new sensation and a new set of critics. Nat. Hawthorne is tickled with the idea. Felton laughs and says, ‘I wouldn't.’ [The plan was abandoned.]”

In the 'forties and 'fifties come Longfellow's extremely popular long narratives: *Evangeline* (1847); *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855), published in the same year as Whitman's first edition of *Leaves of Grass*; and *The Courtship of Miles Standish* (1858). These are all extended narratives upon American themes, and each is written in what was then a novel metrical form.

In 1854, as we have seen, Longfellow gave up teaching in order to devote all his time to writing. In 1861 came the great sorrow of the poet's life, the death of Mrs. Longfellow, who was so badly burned that she died soon afterward. To keep from brooding over his grief and the Civil War, he began translating Dante's *Divine Comedy*. “The Cross of Snow,” a sonnet written eighteen years after Frances Longfellow's death, is one of the very few poems in which Longfellow expresses his deeper feelings. Some critics have mistakenly concluded that the man had no deep feelings.

Some of the poems (especially the sonnets) written after Longfellow's retirement are better

1807-1882-----HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

—and less popular—than his earlier poems. At the same time some of his longer efforts, such as the closet-dramas, *The Divine Tragedy*, *The Golden Legend*, and *The New England Tragedies*, are ventures into a field for which he was not well fitted. The three parts of the *Tales of the Wayside Inn* (1863, 1872, 1873) belong to the field of narrative verse in which Longfellow excelled. As a whole, however, the book is not an unqualified success. Patterned after Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, the collection seems curiously un-American. Chaucer's narrators were thoroughly English; many of Longfellow's do not even belong to New England. Why should he bring a Sicilian or a Spanish Jew to Sudbury, Massachusetts? Professor Fred Lewis Pattee remarks:

“None of our writers travelled so little in their own country; aside from one trip to Washington he never got further west than New York. He looked eastward rather than westward; the study in the old Craigie House had only eastern windows.”

Longfellow, it must be said, took modestly the many honors which came to him. In 1868 he was given an honorary LL.D. degree by the University of Cambridge. After his death in 1882 his bust was placed in Westminster Abbey.

There were a few critics like Margaret Fuller and Poe who thought Longfellow vastly over-rated; but he was unquestionably the most popular poet this country has ever had, and he was hardly less popular among the masses (not the intellectuals) in England. The year before he died, Amelia B. Edwards wrote in an article in the *Literary World* entitled “Longfellow's Place in England”:

“There cannot, I imagine, be any doubt that Professor Longfellow is in England the most widely read of living poets. Messrs. Routledge and Sons, who are his authorized publishers in this country [England], have on sale at the present moment eight different editions of his works, varying in price from one shilling to one guinea; while at least a dozen other houses—profiting by the absence of an international copyright law—publish unauthorized editions. . . . Thus it is that our English versions . . . are as the leaves on the trees, or the pebbles on the shore. Thus it is that at every bookseller's shop in town or country ‘Longfellow's Poems’ are a staple of trade. As a prize-book for schools, as a gift-book, as a drawing-room table book, as a pocket-volume for the woods and fields, our familiar and beloved friend of something like forty years meets us at every turn. Of new copies alone, it is calculated that not less than 30,000 are annually sold in the United Kingdom.”

Nevertheless, as Bliss Perry reminds us, “To the true lover of books, the quality of a poet is everything; the counting of the heads of the poet's audience is but an idle occupation.” Edward Dowden, an Irish scholar who loved Whitman, commented: “. . . except in a heightened enjoyment of the antique . . . Longfellow is one of ourselves—an European. ‘Evangeline’ is an European Idyl of American Life, [Goethe's] Hermann and Dorothea having emigrated to Acadie. ‘Hiawatha’ might have been dreamed in Kensington by a London man of letters.” Anthony Trollope, a British novelist who admired Longfellow, wrote:

“‘This is the pleasantest man I ever met,’ the British stranger is inclined to say [when he meets Longfellow]. ‘He is a first-class gentleman. But where is Longfellow? Where's the American poet?’

"He is, I think, essentially unlike his countrymen,—so much so, that, of all the poets of his day, he is the last that I should have guessed to be an American had I come across his works in ignorance of the fact "

Longfellow was more human than most persons seem to realize. Francis H. Underwood tells the following story:

"When 'Hiawatha' appeared, it was sharply attacked in certain newspapers, and Fields, his publisher, after reading something particularly savage, went out in a state of excitement to see Longfellow. The poet heard the account, and then in a casual way said, 'By the way, Mr. Fields, how is the book selling?' 'Enormously; we are running presses night and day to fill the orders.' 'Very well,' said Longfellow quietly, 'then don't you think we had better let these critics go on advertising it?' "

Every one who knew the man was impressed by his integrity, his kindliness, and his personal charm. Howells said of him: "All men that I have known, besides, have had some foible (it often endeared them the more), or some meanness, or pettiness, or bitterness; but Longfellow had none, nor the suggestion of any." What strikes the modern reader is what impressed the late Gamaliel Bradford, who wrote: "I confess, then, that it puzzles me to find in Longfellow's character this marked element of distinction, or as Howells terms it, 'quality,' which seems to me to be conspicuously lacking in his poetry." The following passages from the letters and journals throw light upon one side of his nature:

"I think it exquisite to read good novels in bed with wax lights in silver candlesticks,—Disraeli's Vivian Grey, for example."

"In the evening F [Mrs. Longfellow]. read Frémont's Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in 1842; highly interesting and exciting. What a wild life, and what a fresh kind of existence! But, ah, the discomforts!"

"Niagara is too much for me; my nerves shake like a bridge of wire; a vague sense of terror and unrest haunts me all the time. My head swims and reels with the ceaseless motion of the water."

"I should doubtless write often, if events often occurred in this silent land which I thought might have an interest for you. But only look at the events! They are like those of the Vicar of Wakefield's life,—migrations from the blue bed to the brown!"

In studying Longfellow's poems, one should not lose sight of the man's profession—the teaching of modern languages and literatures. It was his business to bring to his readers, as to his students, the romance and the beauty of Europe and European literatures. As Bliss Perry remarks, ". . . it was through Longfellow, more than any other man, that the poetry of the Old World—the romance of town and tower and storied stream, the figures of monk and saint and man-at-arms, of troubadour and minnesinger, of artist and builder and dreamer—became the familiar possessions of the New." For a young literature still half enslaved to British traditions, this was an important service; and whatever the lasting poetic quality of his poems and translations, Longfellow will always have an important place in our cultural history.

In spite of his derivative nature, Longfellow is in some ways our most representative poet. The masses cared nothing for Walt Whitman, who tried to create a distinctively American poetry, while they read and approved Longfellow's more conventional verse whether on Amer-

ican themes or not. And in spite of critical disapproval, he is still the most widely read of all our poets. The following selections from his "Table-Talk" (given in Volume III of Samuel Longfellow's *Life*) throw light upon the poet's aims:

"Sometimes a single felicitous expression or line in a poem saves it from oblivion. There are other poems in which no individual lines or passages predominate. Like Wagner's music, they are equally sustained throughout, and depend for their effect upon their impression as a whole, and not on particular parts. Which of these kinds is the better is a question that should neither be asked nor answered. Each is good in its way. We should be thankful for both."

"Shall there be no repose in literature? Shall every author be like a gladiator with swollen veins and distended nostrils, as if each encounter was for life or death?"

"Those poets who make vice beautiful with the beauty of their song are like the Byzantine artists who painted the Devil with a nimbus."

CRITICAL COMMENTS

In studying Longfellow, whom every one has read before coming to college, it is important that we rid ourselves of childish impressions. Longfellow is no Homer or Shakespeare. Neither is he so bad a poet as many twentieth-century critics have concluded. The following critical comments are merely illustrative. Try to find where each critic is right or wrong.

We have said that Mr. Longfellow's conception of the *aims* of poesy is erroneous; and that thus, laboring at a disadvantage he does violent wrong to his own high powers; . . . But didacticism is the prevalent *tone* of his song. His invention, his imagery, his all, is made subservient to the elucidation of some one or more points (but rarely of more than one) which he looks upon as *truth* (Edgar Allan Poe, "Longfellow's Ballads," 1842).

Longfellow is artificial and imitative. He borrows incessantly, and mixes what he borrows, so that it does not appear to the best advantage. He is very faulty in using broken or mixed metaphors. The ethical part of his writing has a hollow, second-hand sound. He has, however, elegance, a love of the beautiful, and a fancy for what is large and manly, if not a full sympathy with it. His verse breathes at times much sweetness; and, if not allowed to supersede what is better may promote a taste for good poetry. Though imitative, he is not mechanical (Margaret Fuller, "American Literature," *Art, Literature, and the Drama*, Boston, 1860, p. 308).

To Longfellow the world was a German picture-book, never detaching itself from the softly colored pages. He was a man of one continuous mood: it was that of a flaxen-haired German student on his *wanderjahr* along the Rhine, under the autumn sun—a sort of expurgated German student—ambling among the ruined castles and reddening vines, and summoning up a thousand bright remnants of an always musical past. His was an eminently Teutonic nature of the old school, a pale-blue melting nature; and white hair and grandchildren still found him with all the confused emotion, the charming sadness, the indefinite high proposals of seventeen (Van Wyck Brooks, *America's Coming-of-Age*, 1915).

Lucidity, gentleness, musicality—these are the essential qualities of Longfellow's poetry (Howard Mumford Jones in John Macy (ed.), *American Writers on American Literature*, 1931, p. 108).

Sympathy, which was the key to Longfellow's character, is the characteristic of his verse—sympathy and serenity. . . .

The reader might be warned—if he will permit the figure of speech—to sample Longfellow gradually, not to gulp him down. The very ease with which he can be consumed is likely to result in an overdose and a consequent distaste. Such a circumstance would be a pity, for, lacking the fiery wormwood of Poe, the light ebullience of Holmes and the heady potation of Whitman, Longfellow's distillation is that of a milder vintage, a delicate but full-flavored wine of honorable associations (Louis Untermeyer, *American Poetry . . . to Whitman*, 1931, p. 274).

The *Life* in three volumes (1885-1887) by Longfellow's brother Samuel contains many letters and extracts from his journal which are of great value. Later biographies, none of which is altogether satisfactory, are by G. R. Carpenter (1901), Thomas Wentworth Higginson (1902), and Herbert S. Gorman (1926). Excellent for the period it covers is Lawrance Thompson, *Young Longfellow, 1807-1843* (1938). James Taft Hatfield's *New Light on Longfellow* (1933) throws light upon Longfellow's German connections. For Longfellow as a teacher, see Carl L. Johnson, *Professor Longfellow of Harvard* (1944). The *Complete Poetical and Prose Works* (Riverside Edition) in eleven volumes were published in 1886. The best edition of the poems is the Cambridge Edition, edited by H. E. Scudder (1893). Odell Shepard's *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: Representative Selections* (1934), in the American Writers Series, contains an admirable introductory essay and an excellent bibliography. Two excellent essays are G. R. Elliott's "The Gentle Shades of Longfellow," *Southwest Review*, April, 1925 (reprinted in his *The Cycle of Modern Poetry*, 1929); and Howard Mumford Jones's "Longfellow," in *American Writers on American Literature* (1931), edited by John Macy. See also Professor Jones's "The Longfellow Nobody Knows," *Outlook*, August 8, 1928.

[The Question of a National Literature]*

from KAVANAGH: A TALE (1849)

Like some of his contemporaries, notably Lowell, Longfellow changed his mind on the much discussed question of a national literature in America. In an early prose article in the *North American Review* (XXXIV, 56-78, January, 1832) he wrote.

" . . . We repeat, then, that we wish our native poets would give a more national character to their writings. In order to effect this, they have only to write more naturally, to write of their own feelings and impressions, from the influence of what they see around them, and not from pre-conceived notions of what poetry ought to be, caught by reading many books, and imitating many models. This is peculiarly true in descriptions of natural scenery. In these, let us have no more sky-larks and nightingales. For us

they only warble in books. A painter might as well introduce an elephant or a rhinoceros into a New England landscape. We would not restrict our poets in the choice of their subjects, or the scenes of their story; but when they sing under an American sky, and describe a native landscape, let the description be graphic, as if it had been seen and not imagined. We wish, too, to see the figures and imagery of poetry a little more characteristic, as if drawn from nature and not from books."

The following extracts from his letters and journal reveal a position similar to that found in *Kavanagh*. To someone who had asked him to contribute to a proposed "Poet's Magazine," Longfellow replied on July 24, 1844:

"I dislike as much as any one can the tone of English criticism in reference to our literature. But when you say, 'It is a lamentable fact that as yet our country has taken no decided steps toward establishing a national literature,' it seems to me that you are repeating one of the most fallacious assertions of the English critics. Upon this point I differ entirely from you in opinion. A national literature is the expression of national character and thought; and as our character and modes of thought do not

* The selections from Longfellow, some of which are still in copyright, are reprinted by permission of, and by arrangement with, the Houghton Mifflin Company.

differ essentially from those of England, our literature cannot. Vast forests, lakes, and prairies cannot make great poets. They are but the scenery of the play, and have much less to do with the poetic character than has been imagined. Neither Mexico nor Switzerland has produced any remarkable poet.

"I do not think a 'Poet's Convention' would help the matter. In fact, the matter needs no helping."

"[Jan. 6, 1847.] Much is said now-a-days of a national literature. Does it mean anything? Such a literature is the expression of national character. We have, or shall have, a composite one, embracing French, Spanish, Irish, English, Scotch, and German peculiarities. Whoever has within himself most of these is our truly national writer. In other words, whoever is most universal is also most national."

"[Nov. 5, 1847.] I can hardly remember from day to day the small matters which take place, great ones there are none. The greatest to-day is the prospectus of a new Magazine in Philadelphia, to build up 'a national literature worthy of the country of Niagara, —of the land of forests and eagles!'"

One evening, as he [Mr. Churchill] was sitting down to begin, for at least the hundredth time, the great Romance,—subject of so many resolves and so much remorse, so often determined upon but never begun,—a loud knock at the street-door, which stood wide open, announced a visitor. Unluckily, the study-door was likewise open, and consequently, being in full view, he found it impossible to refuse himself; nor, in fact, would he have done so, had all the doors been shut and bolted,—the art of refusing one's self being at that time but imperfectly understood in Fairmeadow. Accordingly, the visitor was shown in.

He announced himself as Mr. Hathaway. Passing through the village, he could not deny himself the pleasure of calling on Mr. Churchill, whom he knew by his writings in the periodicals, though not personally. He wished, moreover, to secure the co-operation of one, already so favorably known to the literary world, in a new Magazine he was about to establish, in order to raise the character of American literature, which, in his opinion, the existing reviews and magazines had entirely failed to accomplish. A daily increasing want of something better was felt by the public, and the time had come for the establishment of such a periodical as he proposed. After explaining, in a rather florid and exuberant manner, his plan and prospects, he

entered more at large into the subject of American literature, which it was his design to foster and patronize.

"I think, Mr. Churchill," said he, "that we want a national literature commensurate with our mountains and rivers,—commensurate with Niagara, and the Alleghanies, and the Great Lakes!"¹

"Oh!"

"We want a national epic that shall correspond to the size of the country; that shall be to all other epics what Banvard's Panorama of the Mississippi is to all other paintings,—the largest in the world."²

"Ah!"

"We want a national drama in which scope enough shall be given to our gigantic ideas, and to the unparalleled activity and progress of our people!"

"Of course."

"In a word, we want a national literature altogether shaggy and unshorn, that shall shake the earth, like a herd of buffaloes thundering over the prairies!"

"Precisely," interrupted Mr. Churchill; "but excuse me!—are you not confounding things that have no analogy? Great has a very different meaning when applied to a river, and when applied to a literature. Large and shallow may perhaps be applied to both. Literature is rather an image of the spiritual world, than of the physical, is it not?—of the internal, rather than the external. Mountains, lakes, and rivers are, after all, only its scenery and decorations, not its substance and essence. A man will not necessarily be a great poet because he lives near a great mountain. Nor, being a poet, will he necessarily write better poems than another, because he lives nearer Niagara."

"But, Mr. Churchill, you do not certainly mean to deny the influence of scenery on the mind?"

"No, only to deny that it can create genius."

¹ Hathaway's position recalls that found in Whitman's original preface (1855) to *Leaves of Grass*: "The Americans of all nations at any time upon the earth have probably the fullest poetical nature. The United States themselves are essentially the greatest poem. . . . Here at last is something in the doings of man that corresponds with the broadcast doings of the day and night."

² Banvard's series of paintings, one of the sources of *Evangeline*, was nearly half a mile long.

At best, it can only develop it. Switzerland has produced no extraordinary poet; nor, as far as I know, have the Andes, or the Himalaya mountains, or the Mountains of the Moon in Africa "

"But, at all events," urged Mr. Hathaway, "let us have our literature national. If it is not national, it is nothing."

"On the contrary, it may be a great deal. Nationality is a good thing to a certain extent, but universality is better. All that is best in the great poets of all countries is not what is national in them, but what is universal. Their roots are in their native soil; but their branches wave in the unpatriotic air, that speaks the same language unto all men, and their leaves shine with the illimitable light that pervades all lands. Let us throw all the windows open; let us admit the light and air on all sides; that we may look towards the four corners of the heavens, and not always in the same direction."

"But you admit nationality to be a good thing?"

"Yes, if not carried too far; still, I confess, it rather limits one's views of truth. I prefer what is natural. Mere nationality is often ridiculous. Every one smiles when he hears the Icelandic proverb, 'Iceland is the best land the sun shines upon.' Let us be natural, and we shall be national enough. Besides, our literature can be strictly national only so far as our character and modes of thought differ from those of other nations. Now, as we are very like the English,—are, in fact, English under a different sky,—I do not see how our literature can be very different from theirs. Westward from hand to hand we pass the lighted torch, but it was lighted at the old domestic fireside of England."

"Then you think our literature is never to be anything but an imitation of the English?"

"Not at all. It is not an imitation, but, as some one has said, a continuation."

"It seems to me that you take a very narrow view of the subject."

"On the contrary, a very broad one. No literature is complete until the language in which it is written is dead. We may well be proud of our task and of our position. Let us see if we can build in any way worthy of our forefathers."

"But I insist on originality."

"Yes; but without spasms and convulsions."

Authors must not, like Chinese soldiers, expect to win victories by turning somersets in the air."

"Well, really, the prospect from your point of view is not very brilliant. Pray, what do you think of our national literature?"

"Simply, that a national literature is not the growth of a day. Centuries must contribute their dew and sunshine to it. Our own is growing slowly but surely, striking its roots downward and its branches upward, as is natural; and I do not wish, for the sake of what some people call originality, to invert it, and try to make it grow with its roots in the air. And as for having it so savage and wild as you want it, I have only to say, that all literature, as well as all art, is the result of culture and intellectual refinement."

"Ah! we do not want art and refinement; we want genius,—untutored, wild, original, free."

"But, if this genius is to find any expression, it must employ art, for art is the external expression of our thoughts. Many have genius, but, wanting art, are forever dumb. The two must go together to form the great poet, painter, or sculptor."

"In that sense, very well."

"I was about to say also that I thought our literature would finally not be wanting in a kind of universality. As the blood of all nations is mingling with our own, so will their thoughts and feelings finally mingle in our literature. We shall draw from the Germans, tenderness; from the Spaniards, passion; from the French, vivacity,—to mingle more and more with our English solid sense. And this will give us universality, so much to be desired."

THE DAY IS DONE

(1844)

This poem, which was originally written as a poem for a volume of fugitive poems entitled *The Waif*, which Longfellow edited, serves equally well as a justification of much of Longfellow's own poetry, and is therefore placed first among our selections.

The day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night,

As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village
Gleam through the rain and the mist.
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me
That my soul cannot resist:

A feeling of sadness and longing,
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem,
Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,
Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of Time.

For, like strains of martial music,
Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavor;
And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start;

Who, through long days of labor,
And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares, that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away.

HYMN TO THE NIGHT

(1839; 1839)

- Longfellow wrote this poem in the summer of 1839, "while sitting at my chamber window on one of the balmy nights of the year I endeavored to reproduce the impression of the hour and scene." The poem has something of the elevation of an ode. Poe wrote, "No poem ever opened with a beauty more august." This is characteristic American over-praise, for the poem is inferior to Shelley's "To Night," with which it invites comparison. It is, however, a much better poem than "A Psalm of Life," "Footsteps of Angels," and "The Reaper and the Flowers" (published in the same volume, *Voices of the Night*), all of which are vitiated by sentimentality or prosy didacticism or both.

Ἀσπασίη, τριλλιστος

- 20 I heard the trailing garments of the Night
Sweep through her marble halls!
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls!
- 25 I felt her presence, by its spell of might,
Stoop o'er me from above;
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,
As of the one I love.
- 30 I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
The manifold, soft chimes,
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,
Like some old poet's rhymes.
- 35 From the cool cisterns of the midnight air
My spirit drank repose;
The fountain of perpetual peace flows there,—
From those deep cisterns flows.
- 40 O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear
What man has borne before!
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,
And they complain no more.
- 45 Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this prayer!
Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice-prayed for,¹ the most
fair,
The best-belovèd Night!

50

¹ "The welcome, the thrice-prayed for" is a translation of the Greek motto prefixed to the poem.

THE SKELETON IN ARMOR

(1840)

"The Skeleton in Armor" is one of Longfellow's best ballads Poe, who was not accustomed to praise the work of New England writers, wrote in his review of Longfellow's *Ballads and Other Poems*:

"In 'The Skeleton in Armor' we find a pure and perfect thesis artistically treated. We find the beauty of bold courage and self-confidence, of love and maiden devotion, of reckless adventure, and finally of life-contemning grief . . . The metre is simple, sonorous, well-balanced, and fully adapted to the subject."

Longfellow wrote in his journal on May 3, 1838: "I have been looking at the old Northern Sagas, and thinking of a series of ballads or a romantic poem on the deeds of the first bold viking who crossed to this western world, with storm-spirits and devil-machinery under water." The immediate occasion of the poem was the discovery of the skeleton of a supposed Norseman at Fall River. After the ballad was written, Longfellow wrote to his father on December 13, 1840: "[In the poem] I suppose it to be the remains of one of the old Northern sea rovers who came to this country in the tenth century. Of course I make the tradition myself." One of Longfellow's best longer narratives is "The Saga of King Olaf" in *Tales of a Wayside Inn*. "The Skeleton in Armor" should be compared with Shelley's "The Fugitives," to which it is perhaps indebted.

"Speak! speak! thou fearful guest
Who, with thy hollow breast
Still in rude armor drest,
Comest to daunt me!
Wrapt not in Eastern balms,
But with thy fleshless palms
Stretched, as if asking alms,
Why dost thou haunt me?"

Then, from those cavernous eyes
Pale flashes seemed to rise,
As when the Northern skies
Gleam in December;
And, like the water's flow
Under December's snow,
Came a dull voice of woe
From the heart's chamber.

"I was a Viking old!
My deeds, though manifold,
No Skald in song has told,
No Saga taught thee!

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Take heed, that in thy verse
Thou dost the tale rehearse,
Else dread a dead man's curse;
For this I sought thee.

"Far in the Northern Land,
By the wild Baltic's strand,
I, with my childish hand,
Tamed the gerfalcon,
And, with my skates fast-bound,
Skimmed the half-frozen Sound,
That the poor whimpering hound
Trembled to walk on.

"Oft to his frozen lair
Tracked I the grisly bear,
While from my path the hare
Fled like a shadow;
Oft through the forest dark
Followed the were-wolf's bark,
Until the soaring lark
Sang from the meadow.

"But when I older grew,
Joining a corsair's crew,
O'er the dark sea I flew
With the marauders.
Wild was the life we led;
Many the souls that sped,
Many the hearts that bled,
By our stern orders.

"Many a wassail-bout
Wore the long Winter out;
Often our midnight shout
Set the cocks crowing,
As we the Berserk's tale
Measured in cups of ale,
Draining the oaken pail,
Filled to o'erflowing.

"Once as I told in glee
Tales of the stormy sea,
Soft eyes did gaze on me,
Burning yet tender;
And as the white stars shine
On the dark Norway pine,
On that dark heart of mine
Fell their soft splendor.

"I wooed the blue-eyed maid,
Yielding, yet half afraid,

And in the forest's shade
 Our vows were plighted.
 Under its loosened vest
 Fluttered her little breast,
 Like birds within their nest
 By the hawk frightened.

"Bright in her father's hall
 Shields gleamed upon the wall,
 Loud sang the minstrels all,
 Chanting his glory,
 When of old Hildebrand
 I asked his daughter's hand,
 Mute did the minstrels stand.
 To hear my story

"While the brown ale he quaffed,
 Loud then the champion laughed,
 And as the wind-gusts waft
 The sea-foam brightly,
 So the loud laugh of scorn,
 Out of those lips unshorn,
 From the deep drinking-horn
 Blew the foam lightly.

"She was a Prince's child,
 I but a Viking wild,
 And though she blushed and smiled,
 I was discarded!
 Should not the dove so white
 Follow the sea-mew's flight,
 Why did they leave that night
 Her nest unguarded?

"Scarce had I put to sea,
 Bearing the maid with me,
 Fairest of all was she
 Among the Norsemen!
 When on the white sea-strand,
 Waving his armed hand,
 Saw we old Hildebrand,
 With twenty horsemen.

"Then launched they to the blast,
 Bent like a reed each mast,
 Yet we were gaining fast,
 When the wind failed us;
 And with a sudden flaw
 Came round the gusty Skaw,
 So that our foe we saw
 Laugh as he hailed us.

"And as to catch the gale
 Round veered the flapping sail,
 'Death!' was the helmsman's hail,
 'Death without quarter!'
 5 Mid-ships with iron keel
 Struck we her ribs of steel;
 Down her black hulk did reel
 Through the black water!

10 "As with his wings aslant,
 Sails the fierce cormorant,
 Seeking some rocky haunt,
 With his prey laden,—
 So toward the open main,
 15 Beating to sea again,
 Through the wild hurricane,
 Bore I the maiden.

"Three weeks we westward bore,
 20 And when the storm was o'er
 Cloud-like we saw the shore
 Stretching to leeward;
 There for my lady's bower
 Built I the lofty tower,
 25 Which, to this very hour,
 Stands looking seaward.

"There lived we many years;
 Time dried the maiden's tears;
 30 She had forgot her fears,
 She was a mother;
 Death closed her mild blue eyes,
 Under that tower she lies;
 Ne'er shall the sun arise
 35 On such another!

"Still grew my bosom then,
 Still as a stagnant fen!
 Hateful to me were men,
 40 The sunlight hateful!
 In the vast forest here,
 Clad in my warlike gear,
 Fell I upon my spear,
 Oh, death was grateful!

45 "Thus, seamed with many scars,
 Bursting these prison bars,
 Up to its native stars
 My soul ascended!
 50 There from the flowing bowl
 Deep drinks the warrior's soul,

Skoal! to the Northland! *skaal!*"¹
Thus the tale ended.

SERENADE

from THE SPANISH STUDENT (1843)
(1840)

Stars of the summer night!
Far in yon azure deeps,
Hide, hide your golden light!
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

Moon of the summer night!
Far down yon western steeps,
Sink, sink in silver light!
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

Wind of the summer night!
Where yonder woodbine creeps,
Fold, fold thy pinions light!
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

Dreams of the summer night!
Tell her, her lover keeps
Watch! while in slumbers light
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

MEZZO CAMMIN²

(1842; 1886)

Half of my life is gone, and I have let
The years slip from me and have not fulfilled
The aspiration of my youth, to build
Some tower of song with lofty parapet.
Not indolence, nor pleasure, nor the fret

¹ "In Scandinavia, this is the customary salutation when drinking a health. I have slightly changed the orthography of the word [*skaal*] in order to preserve the correct pronunciation." (Longfellow's note.)

² "In the middle of the way (or journey)." Cf. the opening line of Dante's *Divine Comedy* in Longfellow's translation: "Midway upon the journey of our life."

Of restless passions that would not be stilled,
But sorrow, and a care that almost killed,
Kept me from what I may accomplish yet;
Though, half-way up the hill, I see the Past
5 Lying beneath me with its sounds and sights,—
A city in the twilight dim and vast,
With smoking roofs, soft bells, and gleaming
lights,—
And hear above me on the autumnal blast
10 The cataract of Death far thundering from the
heights.

SEAWEED

(1845)

15 "In versification, verbal music, and imagery, the first four stanzas of this poem are among the finest things of Longfellow's accomplishment. To the taste of our day the final stanzas are worse than useless. Longfellow's homiletic method is clearly illustrated here" (Odell Shepard, *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*, p. 354).

When descends on the Atlantic
The gigantic
Storm-wind of the equinox,
Landward in his wrath he scourges
The toiling surges,
Laden with seaweed from the rocks:
30 From Bermuda's reefs, from edges
Of sunken ledges,
In some far-off, bright Azore;
From Bahama, and the dashing,
Silver-flashing
35 Surges of San Salvador;

From the tumbling surf, that buries
The Orkneyan skerries,
40 Answering the hoarse Hebrides;
And from wrecks of ships, and drifting
Spars, uplifting
On the desolate, rainy seas;—

45 Ever drifting, drifting, drifting
On the shifting
Currents of the restless main;
Till in sheltered coves, and reaches
Of sandy beaches,
50 All have found repose again.

So when storms of wild emotion
Strike the ocean

Of the poet's soul, erelong
From each cave and rocky fastness,
In its vastness,
Floats some fragment of a song

From the far-off isles enchanted,
Heaven has planted
With the golden fruit of Truth;
From the flashing surf, whose vision
Gleams Elysian
In the tropic clime of Youth;

From the strong Will, and the Endeavor
That forever
Wrestle with the tides of Fate;
From the wreck of Hopes far-scattered,
Tempest-shattered,
Floating waste and desolate,—

Ever drifting, drifting, drifting
On the shifting
Currents of the restless heart;
Till at length in books recorded,
They, like hoarded
Household words, no more depart.

CURFEW

(1845)

This poem was placed at the end of *The Belfry of Bruges and Other Poems*, published in 1845 but dated 1846.

I

Solemnly, mournfully,
Dealing its dole,
The Curfew Bell
Is beginning to toll.

Cover the embers,
And put out the light;
Toil comes with the morning,
And rest with the night.

Dark grow the windows,
And quenched is the fire;
Sound fades into silence,—
All footsteps retire.

No voice in the chambers,
No sound in the hall!
Sleep and oblivion
Reign over all!

II

The book is completed,
And closed, like the day;
And the hand that has written it
Lays it away.

Dim grows its fancies;
Forgotten they lie;
Like coals in the ashes,
They darken and die.

Song sinks into silence,
The story is told,
The windows are darkened,
The hearth-stone is cold.

Darker and darker
The black shadows fall;
Sleep and oblivion
Reign over all.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

(1859; 1860)

Cf Longfellow's letter to Emily A—, August 18, 1859.

"Your letter followed me down here by the sea-side, where I am passing the summer with my three little girls. The oldest is about your age; but as little girls' ages keep changing every year, I can never remember exactly how old she is, and have to ask her mamma, who has a better memory than I have. Her name is Alice; I never forget that. She is a nice girl, and loves poetry almost as much as you do.

"The second is Edith, with blue eyes and beautiful golden locks which I sometimes call her 'nankeen hair' to make her laugh. She is a very busy little woman, and wears gray boots.

"The youngest is Allegra; which, you know, means merry; and she is the merriest little thing you ever saw,—always singing and laughing all over the house. . . .

"I do not say anything about the two boys. They are such noisy fellows it is of no use to talk about them "

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,

The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape, they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old mustache as I am
Is not a match for you all!

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away!

THE JEWISH CEMETERY AT NEWPORT

(1852)

While at Newport, Rhode Island, on July 9, 1852,
Longfellow wrote in his journal:

"Went this morning into the Jewish burying-
ground, with a polite old gentleman who keeps the

key. There are few graves, nearly all are low tomb-
stones of marble with Hebrew inscriptions and a
few words added in English or Portuguese At the
foot of each, the letters S A G D G [Su Alma Gou
Divina Gloria May his soul enjoy divine gloiy]
5 It is a shady nook, at the corner of two dusty, fre-
quented streets, with an iron fence and a granite
gateway, erected at the expense of Mr. Touro, of
New Orleans."

10 How strange it seems! These Hebrews in their
graves,

Close by the street of this fair seaport town,
Silent beside the never-silent waves,
At rest in all this moving up and down!

15 The trees are white with dust, that o'er their
sleep
Wave their broad curtains in the south-wind's
breath,

20 While underneath these leafy tents they keep
The long, mysterious Exodus of Death.

And these sepulchral stones, so old and brown,
That pave with level flags their burial-place,
25 Seem like the tablets of the Law, thrown down
And broken by Moses at the mountain's base.

The very names recorded here are strange,
Of foreign accent, and of different climes;
30 Alvares and Rivera interchange
With Abraham and Jacob of old times.

"Blessed be God! for he created Death!"
The mourners said, "and Death is rest and
35 peace";
Then added, in the certainty of faith,
"And giveth Life that never more shall cease."

Closed are the portals of their Synagogue,
40 No Psalms of David now the silence break,
No Rabbi reads the ancient Decalogue
In the grand dialect the Prophets spake.

Gone are the living, but the dead remain,
45 And not neglected; for a hand unseen,
Scattering its bounty, like a summer rain,
Still keeps their graves and their remem-
brance green.

50 How came they here? What burst of Christian
hate,
What persecution, merciless and blind,

1807-1882-----HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Drove o'er the sea—that desert desolate—
These Ishmaels and Hagars of mankind?

They lived in narrow streets and lanes obscure,
Ghetto and Judenstrass, in mirk and mire;
Taught in the school of patience to endure
The life of anguish and the death of fire.

All their lives long, with the unleavened bread
And bitter herbs of exile and its fears,
The wasting famine of the heart they fed,
And slaked its thirst with marah¹ of their tears.

Anathema maranatha!² was the cry
That ran from town to town, from street to street;

At every gate the accursèd Mordecai
Was mocked and jeered, and spurned by
Christian feet.

Pride and humiliation hand in hand
Walked with them through the world where'er
they went;
Trampled and beaten were they as the sand,
And yet unshaken as the continent.

For in the background figures vague and vast
Of patriarchs and of prophets rose sublime,
And all the great traditions of the Past
They saw reflected in the coming time.

And thus forever with reverted look
The mystic volume of the world they read,
Spelling it backward, like a Hebrew book,
Till life became a Legend of the Dead.

But ah! what once has been shall be no more!
The groaning earth in travail and in pain
Brings forth its races, but does not restore,
And the dead nations never rise again.

MY LOST YOUTH

(1855; 1858)

If we exclude the sonnets, this is one of Longfellow's finest short poems. For an account of the origin of the poem and the source of the refrain, see James Taft Hatfield, "Longfellow's Lapland

¹ Bitter waters. See Exodus, xv: 23-35.

² A double curse.

Song," *Publications* of the Modern Language Association, XLV, 1188 ff (December, 1930).

Often I think of the beautiful town
That is seated by the sea;
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,
And my youth comes back to me.
And a verse of a Lapland song
Is haunting my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

15 I can see the shadowy lines of its trees,
And catch, in sudden gleams,
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,
And islands that were the Hesperides
Of all my boyish dreams.
20 And the burden of that old song,
It murmurs and whispers still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the black wharves and the slips,
And the sea-tides tossing free;
And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,
And the magic of the sea.
And the voice of that wayward song
Is singing and saying still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the bulwarks by the shore,
And the fort upon the hill;
The sunrise gun, with its hollow roar,
40 The drum-beat repeated o'er and o'er,
And the bugle wild and shrill.
And the music of that old song
Throbs in my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
45 And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the sea-fight³ far away,
How it thundered o'er the tide!

³ The engagement between the American brig *Enterprise* and the English brig *Boxer* took place off Portland in 1813.

And the dead captains, as they lay
In their graves, o'erlooking the tranquil bay
Where they in battle died.

And the sound of that mournful song
Goes through me with a thrill
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts"

I can see the breezy dome of groves,
The shadows of Deering's Woods;
And the friendships old and the early loves
Come back with a Sabbath sound, as of doves
In quiet neighborhoods.

And the verse of that sweet old song,
It flutters and murmurs still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts."

I remember the gleams and glooms that dart
Across the school-boy's brain,
The song and the silence in the heart,
That in part are prophecies, and in part
Are longings wild and vain.

And the voice of that fitful song
Sings on, and is never still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts."

There are things of which I may not speak;
There are dreams that cannot die;
There are thoughts that make the strong heart
weak,

And bring a pallor into the cheek,
And a mist before the eye.
And the words of that fatal song
Come over me like a chill:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts."

Strange to me now are the forms I meet
When I visit the dear old town;
But the native air is pure and sweet,
And the trees that o'ershadow each well-known
street,

As they balance up and down,
Are singing the beautiful song,
Are sighing and whispering still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,

And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts."

And Deering's Woods are fresh and fair,
5 And with joy that is almost pain
My heart goes back to wander there,
And among the dreams of the days that were,
I find my lost youth again.
And the strange and beautiful song,
10 The groves are repeating it still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts."

KILLED AT THE FORD

(1866)

This poem, said Longfellow, "was not a record of any one event which came to my knowledge, but of many which came to my imagination. It is an attempt to express something of the inexpressible sympathy which I feel for the death of the young men in the war, which makes my heart bleed whenever I think of it." Compare this poem with some of Walt Whitman's war poems.

25 He is dead, the beautiful youth,
The heart of honor, the tongue of truth,
He, the life and light of us all,
Whose voice was blithe as a bugle-call,
30 Whom all eyes followed with one consent,
The cheer of whose laugh, and whose pleasant
word,
Hushed all murmurs of discontent.

35 Only last night, as we rode along
Down the dark of the mountain gap,
To visit the picket-guard at the ford,
Little dreaming of any mishap,
He was humming the words of some old song:
40 "Two red roses he had on his cap
And another he bore at the point of his sword."

Sudden and swift a whistling ball
Came out of a wood, and the voice was still;
45 Something I heard in the darkness fall,
And for a moment my blood grew chill;
I spake in a whisper, as one who speaks
In a room where some one is lying dead;
But he made no answer to what I said.

50 We lifted him up to his saddle again,
And through the mire and the mist and the rain

Carried him back to the silent camp,
And laid him as if asleep on his bed;
And I saw by the light of the surgeon's lamp
Two white roses upon his cheeks,
And one, just over his heart, blood-red!

And I saw in a vision how far and fleet
That fatal bullet went speeding forth,
Till it reached a town in the distant North,
Till it reached a house in a sunny street,
Till it reached a heart that ceased to beat
Without a murmur, without a cry;
And a bell was tolled, in that far-off town,
For one who had passed from cross to crown,
And the neighbors wondered that she should
die.

DANTE

(1845)

This sonnet is given out of its chronological order that it may be read along with the "Divina Commedia" sonnets which follow.

Tuscan, that wanderest through the realms of 25
gloom,
With thoughtful pace, and sad, majestic eyes,
Stern thoughts and awful from thy soul arise,
Like Farinata¹ from his fiery tomb.
Thy sacred song is like the trump of doom; 30
Yet in thy heart what human sympathies,
What soft compassion glows, as in the skies
The tender stars their clouded lamps relume!
Methinks I see thee stand with pallid cheeks
By Fra Hilario in his diocese, 35
As up the convent-walls, in golden streaks,
The ascending sunbeams mark the day's decrease;
And, as he asks what there the stranger seeks,
Thy voice along the cloister whispers 40
"Peace!"²

¹ See *Inferno*, Canto X.

² The Frate Ilario describes an interview he had with the exiled Dante at the Convent of Corvo: "Hither he came . . . moved either by the religion of the place, or by some other feeling. . . . I questioned him of his wishings and his seekings there. He moved not; but stood silently contemplating the columns and arches of the cloister. And again I asked him what he wished, and whom he sought. Then, slowly turning his head, and looking at the friars and at me, he answered: 'Peace!'"

DIVINA COMMEDIA

(1864-1867)

These six sonnets are among the finest poems that Longfellow ever wrote. Poems about other poets, however, are seldom popular, and these sonnets are not written in the simple language of "A Psalm of Life" or "The Wreck of the Hesperus."

Lowell in his essay on Dante followed Longfellow in comparing the *Divine Comedy* to a Catholic cathedral: "As the Gothic cathedral, then, is the type of the Christian idea, so is it also of Dante's poem . . ." Note that the first two sonnets are, in the published translation, prefixed to the *Inferno*, the third and fourth to the *Purgatory*, and the last two to the *Paradise*.

So deeply was Longfellow grieved by the death of his second wife that during a whole decade he wrote little besides his translation of Dante's epic. Unlike many other poets, who have alleviated their sorrows by writing about them, Longfellow worked upon his translation in order to avoid too long brooding over his grief and the troubles of the nation, then engaged in the Civil War.

I

Oft have I seen at some cathedral door
A laborer, pausing in the dust and heat,
Lay down his burden, and with reverent feet
Enter, and cross himself, and on the floor
Kneel to repeat his paternoster o'er;
Far off the noises of the world retreat;
The loud vociferations of the street
Become an undistinguishable roar.
So, as I enter here from day to day,
And leave my burden at this minster gate, 35
Kneeling in prayer, and not ashamed to pray,
The tumult of the time disconsolate
To inarticulate murmurs dies away,
While the eternal ages watch and wait.

II

How strange the sculptures that adorn these
towers!
This crowd of statues, in whose folded sleeves
Birds build their nests; while canopied with
leaves
Parvis and portal bloom like trellised bowers,
And the vast minster seems a cross of flowers!
But fiends and dragons on the gargoyled eaves
Watch the dead Christ between the living
thieves,
And, underneath, the traitor Judas lowers!
Ah! from what agonies of heart and brain,

What exultations trampling on despair,
 What tenderness, what tears, what hate of
 wrong,
 What passionate outcry of a soul in pain,
 Uprose this poem of the earth and air,
 This mediæval miracle of song!

III

I enter, and I see thee in the gloom
 Of the long aisles, O poet saturnine!
 And strive to make my steps keep pace with
 thine.
 The air is filled with some unknown perfume;
 The congregation of the dead make room
 For thee to pass; the votive tapers shine;
 Like rooks that haunt Ravenna's groves of pine
 The hovering echoes fly from tomb to tomb.
 From the confessionals I hear arise
 Rehearsals of forgotten tragedies,
 And lamentations from the crypts below;
 And then a voice celestial that begins
 With the pathetic words, "Although your sins
 As scarlet be," and ends with "as the snow."

IV

With snow-white veil and garments as of flame,
 She stands before thee, who so long ago
 Filled thy young heart with passion and the
 woe
 From which thy song and all its splendors came; 30
 And while with stern rebuke she speaks thy
 name,
 The ice about thy heart melts as the snow
 On mountain heights, and in swift overflow
 Comes gushing from thy lips in sobs of shame. 35
 Thou makest full confession; and a gleam,
 As of the dawn on some dark forest cast,
 Seems on thy lifted forehead to increase;
 Lethe and Eunoë—the remembered dream
 And the forgotten sorrow—bring at last
 That perfect pardon which is perfect peace.

V

I lift mine eyes, and all the windows blaze
 With forms of Saints and holy men who died, 45
 Here martyred and hereafter glorified;
 And the great Rose upon its leaves displays
 Christ's Triumph, and the angelic roundelays,
 With splendor upon splendor multiplied;
 And Beatrice again at Dante's side 50
 No more rebukes, but smiles her words of praise.
 And then the organ sounds, and unseen choirs

Sing the old Latin hymns of peace and love
 And benedictions of the Holy Ghost,
 And the melodious bells among the spires
 O'er all the house-tops and through heaven
 5 above
 Proclaim the elevation of the Host!

VI

O star of morning and of liberty!
 10 O bringer of the light, whose splendor shines
 Above the darkness of the Apennines,
 Forerunner of the day that is to be!
 The voices of the city and the sea,
 The voices of the mountains and the pines,
 15 Repeat thy song, till the familiar lines
 Are footpaths for the thought of Italy!
 Thy flame is blown abroad from all the heights,
 Through all the nations, and a sound is heard,
 As of a mighty wind, and men devout,
 20 Strangers of Rome, and the new proselytes,
 In their own language hear the wondrous word,
 And many are amazed and many doubt.

FINALE

from CHRISTUS: A MYSTERY (1872)
 SAINT JOHN *wandering over the face of the*
Earth.

SAINT JOHN:

The Ages come and go,
 The Centuries pass as Years;
 My hair is white as the snow,
 35 My feet are weary and slow,
 The earth is wet with my tears!
 The kingdoms crumble, and fall
 Apart, like a ruined wall,
 Or a bank that is undermined
 40 By a river's ceaseless flow,
 And leave no trace behind!
 The world itself is old;
 The portals of Time unfold
 On hinges of iron, that grate
 And groan with the rust and the weight,
 Like the hinges of a gate
 That hath fallen to decay;
 But the evil doth not cease;
 There is war instead of peace,
 50 Instead of Love there is hate;
 And still I must wander and wait,
 Still I must watch and pray,

1807-1882-----HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Not forgetting in whose sight,
A thousand years in their flight
Are as a single day.

The life of man is a gleam
Of light, that comes and goes
Like the course of the Holy Stream,
The cityless river, that flows
From fountains no one knows,
Through the Lake of Galilee,
Through forests and level lands,
Over rocks, and shallows, and sands
Of a wilderness wild and vast,
Till it findeth its rest at last
In the desolate Dead Sea!
But alas! alas for me
Nor yet this rest shall be!

What, then! doth Charity fail?
Is Faith of no avail?
Is Hope blown out like a light
By a gust of wind in the night?
The clashing of creeds, and the strife
Of the many beliefs, that in vain
Perplex man's heart and brain,
Are naught but the rustle of leaves,
When the breath of God upheaves
The boughs of the Tree of Life,
And they subside again!
And I remember still
The words, and from whom they came,
Not he that repeateth the name,
But he that doeth the will!

And him evermore I behold
Walking in Galilee,
Through the cornfield's waving gold,
In hamlet, in wood, and in wold,
By the shores of the Beautiful Sea.
He toucheth the sightless eyes;
Before Him the demons flee;
To the dead He sayeth: Arise!
To the living: Follow me!
And that voice still soundeth on
From the centuries that are gone,
To the centuries that shall be!

From all vain pomps and shows,
From the pride that overflows,
And the false conceits of men;
From all the narrow rules
And subtleties of Schools,

And the craft of tongue and pen;
Bewildered in its search,
Bewildered with the cry:
Lo, here! lo, there, the Church!
5 Poor, sad Humanity
Through all the dust and heat
Turns back with bleeding feet,
By the weary road it came,
Unto the simple thought
10 By the great Master taught,
And that remaineth still:
Not he that repeateth the name,
But he that doeth the will!

15

A NAMELESS GRAVE

(1874; 1874)

Someone sent to Longfellow in 1864 a newspaper clipping which described the graveyard at Newport News, Virginia. The words, "A Union Soldier mustered out," were written on the wooden board which stood at the head of the grave. Compare Walt Whitman's "As Toilsome I Wander'd Virginia's Woods" and poetic tributes to the Unknown Soldier of the First World War—particularly Carl Sandburg's "And So To-day."

"A soldier of the Union mustered out,"
Is the inscription on an unknown grave
30 At Newport News, beside the salt-sea wave,
Nameless and dateless, sentinel or scout
Shot down in skirmish, or disastrous rout
Of battle, when the loud artillery drave
Its iron wedges through the ranks of brave
35 And doomed battalions, storming the re-
doubt.
Thou unknown hero sleeping by the sea
In thy forgotten grave! with secret shame
I feel my pulses beat, my forehead burn,
40 When I remember thou hast given for me
All that thou hadst, thy life, thy very name,
And I can give thee nothing in return.

45

SHAKESPEARE

(1873; 1875)

A vision as of crowded city streets,
With human life in endless overflow;
50 Thunder of thoroughfares; trumpets that blow
To battle; clamor, in obscure retreats,
Of sailors landed from their anchored fleets;

Tolling of bells in turrets, and below
Voices of children, and bright flowers that
throw

O'er garden-walls their intermingled sweets!
This vision comes to me when I unfold
The volume of the Poet paramount,
Whom all the Muses loved, not one alone;—
Into his hands they put the lyre of gold,
And, crowned with sacred laurel at their fount,
Placed him as Musagetes¹ on their throne.

MILTON

(1873, 1875)

I pace the sounding sea-beach and behold
How the voluminous billows roll and run,
Upheaving and subsiding, while the sun
Shines through their shected emerald far un-
rolled,
And the ninth wave, slow gathering fold by
fold
All its loose-flowing garments into one,
Plunges upon the shore, and floods the dun
Pale reach of sands, and changes them to gold.
So in majestic cadence rise and fall
The mighty undulations of thy song,
O sightless bard, England's Mæonides!²
And ever and anon, high over all
Uplifted, a ninth wave superb and strong,
Floods all the soul with its melodious seas.

NATURE

(1876)

As a fond mother, when the day is o'er,
Leads by the hand her little child to bed,
Half willing, half reluctant to be led,
And leave his broken playthings on the floor,
Still gazing at them through the open door,
Nor wholly reassured and comforted
By promises of others in their stead,
Which, though more splendid, may not please
him more;
So Nature deals with us, and takes away
Our playthings one by one, and by the hand
Leads us to rest so gently, that we go
Scarce knowing if we wish to go or stay,

¹ Leader of the Muses; Apollo.

² Homer.

Being too full of sleep to understand
How far the unknown transcends the what we
know.

A BALLAD OF THE FRENCH FLEET

(1877; 1877)

This ballad is based on a historical incident. In 1877, when the Old South Church was in danger of being destroyed, the Rev. Edward Everett Hale, author of "The Man without a Country," wrote to Longfellow:

"You told me that if the spirit moved, you would try to sing us a song for the Old South Meeting-house I have found such a charming story that I think it will really tempt you . . . The whole story of the fleet is in Hutchinson's *Massachusetts*, II, 384, 385 . . . I should think that the assembly in the meeting-house in the gale, and then the terror of the fleet when the gale struck them, would make a ballad—if the spirit moved!"

There is a dramatic appropriateness in placing the story in the mouth of Thomas Prince, the pastor of the Old South.

OCTOBER, 1746

MR. THOMAS PRINCE *loquitur*.¹

A fleet with flags arrayed
Sailed from the port of Brest,
And the Admiral's ship displayed
The signal: "Steer southwest."
For this Admiral D'Anville
Had sworn by cross and crown
To ravage with fire and steel
Our helpless Boston Town.

There were rumors in the street,
In the houses there was fear
Of the coming of the fleet,
And the danger hovering near.
And while from mouth to mouth
Spread the tidings of dismay,
I stood in the Old South,
Saying humbly: "Let us pray!"

"O Lord! we would not advise;
But if in thy Providence
A tempest should arise
To drive the French Fleet hence,

¹ Speaks.

And scatter it far and wide,
Or sink it in the sea,
We should be satisfied,
And thine the glory be."

This was the prayer I made,
For my soul was all on flame,
And even as I prayed
The answering tempest came;
It came with a mighty power,
Shaking the windows and walls,
And tolling the bell in the tower,
As it tolls at funerals.

The lightning suddenly
Unsheathed its flaming sword,
And I cried: "Stand still, and see
The salvation of the Lord!"
The heavens were black with cloud,
The sea was white with hail,
And ever more fierce and loud
Blew the October gale.

The fleet it overtook,
And the broad sails in the van
Like the tents of Cushan shook,
Or the curtains of Midian.
Down on the reeling decks
Crashed the o'erwhelming seas;
Ah, never were there wrecks
So pitiful as these!

Like a potter's vessel broke
The great ships of the line;
They were carried away as a smoke,
Or sank like lead in the brine.
O Lord! before thy path
They vanished and ceased to be,
When thou didst walk in wrath
With thine horses through the sea!

CASTLES IN SPAIN

(1878)

The charm which romantic Europe held for Longfellow is seen in "Nuremberg" and "The Belfry of Bruges," which are better known but hardly superior to "Castles in Spain." Irving, of whose work Longfellow was very fond, wrote in the chapter on "Spanish Romance" in *The Alhambra*:

"In fact, Spain, even at the present day [1832], is a country apart; severed in history, habits, manners, and modes of thinking, from all the rest of Europe.

It is a romantic country; but its romance has none of the sentimentality of modern European romance; it is chiefly derived from the brilliant regions of the East, and from the high-minded school of Saracenic chivalry."

5

How much of my young heart, O Spain,
Went out to thee in days of yore!
What dreams romantic filled my brain,
And summoned back to life again
10 The Paladins of Charlemagne,
The Cid Campeador!¹

And shapes more shadowy than these
In the dim twilight half revealed;
15 Phœnician galleys on the seas,
The Roman camps like hives of bees,
The Goth uplifting from his knees
Pelayo on his shield.

It was these memories perchance,
From annals of remotest eld,
That lent the colors of romance
To every trivial circumstance,
And changed the form and countenance
25 Of all that I beheld.

Old towns, whose history lies hid
In monkish chronicle or rhyme,
Burgos, the birthplace of the Cid,
30 Zamora and Valladolid,
Toledo, built and walled amid
The wars of Wamba's time;

The long, straight line of the highway,
35 The distant town that seems so near,
The peasants in the fields, that stay
Their toil to cross themselves and pray,
When from the belfry at midday
The Angelus they hear;

40

White crosses in the mountain pass,
Mules gay with tassels, the loud din
Of muleteers, the tethered ass
That crops the dusty wayside grass,
45 And cavaliers with spurs of brass
Alighting at the inn;

White hamlets hidden in fields of wheat,
White cities slumbering by the sea,

¹ Don Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar, national hero of Spain, who fought against the Moors; hero of Corneille's *Le Cid*.

White sunshine flooding square and street,
Dark mountain-ranges, at whose feet
The river beds are dry with heat,—
All was a dream to me.

Yet something sombre and severe
O'er the enchanted landscape reigned;
A terror in the atmosphere
As if King Philip listened near,
Or Torquemada, the austere,
His ghostly sway maintained.

The softer Andalusian skies
Dispelled the sadness and the gloom;
There Cadiz by the seaside lies,
And Seville's orange-orchards rise,
Making the land a paradise
Of beauty and of bloom.

There Cordova is hidden among
The palm, the olive, and the vine;
Gem of the South, by poets sung,
And in whose Mosque Almanzor hung
As lamps the bells that once had rung
At Compostella's shrine.

But over all the rest supreme,
The star of stars, the cynosure,
The artist's and the poet's theme,
The young man's vision, the old man's dream,—
Granada by its winding stream,
The city of the Moor!

And there the Alhambra still recalls
Aladdin's palace of delight:
Allah il Allah! through its halls
Whispers the fountain as it falls,
The Darro darts beneath its walls,
The hills with snow are white.

Ah yes, the hills are white with snow,
And cold with blasts that bite and freeze;
But in the happy vale below
The orange and pomegranate grow,
And wafts of air toss to and fro
The blossoming almond trees.

The Vega cleft by the Xenil,
The fascination and allure
Of the sweet landscape chains the will;
The traveller lingers on the hill,
His parted lips are breathing still
The last sigh of the Moor.

How like a ruin overgrown
With flowers that hide the rents of time,
Stands now the Past that I have known,
Castles in Spain, not built of stone
5 But of white summer clouds, and blown
Into this little mist of rhyme!

THE CROSS OF SNOW

(1879, 1886)

This is one of the few poems in which Longfellow writes of his deeper emotions.

15 In the long, sleepless watches of the night,
A gentle face—the face of one long dead—
Looks at me from the wall, where round its
head
The night-lamp casts a halo of pale light.
20 Here in this room she died; and soul more
white
Never through martyrdom of fire was led
To its repose; nor can in books be read
The legend of a life more benedight.
25 There is a mountain in the distant West,
That, sun-defying, in its deep ravines
Displays a cross of snow upon its side.
Such is the cross I wear upon my breast
These eighteen years, through all the changing
30 scenes
And seasons, changeless since the day she died.

THE TIDE RISES, THE TIDE FALLS

(1879; 1880)

The tide rises, the tide falls,
The twilight darkens, the curfew calls;
Along the sea-sands damp and brown
40 The traveller hastens toward the town,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.
Darkness settles on roofs and walls,
But the sea, the sea in the darkness calls;
45 The little waves, with their soft, white hands,
Efface the footprints in the sands,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

The morning breaks; the steeds in their stalls
50 Stamp and neigh, as the hostler calls;
The day returns, but nevermore
Returns the traveller to the shore,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

POSSIBILITIES

(1882)

Where are the Poets, unto whom belong
The Olympian heights, whose singing shafts
were sent
Straight to the mark, and not from bows half
bent,
But with the utmost tension of the thong?
Where are the stately argosies of song,
Whose rushing keels made music as they went
Sailing in search of some new continent,

5

With all sail set, and steady winds and strong?
Perhaps there lives some dreamy boy, untaught
In schools, some graduate of the field or street,
Who shall become a master of the art,
An admiral sailing the high seas of thought,¹
Fearless and first, and steering with his fleet
For lands not yet laid down in any chart.

10

¹ Compare the superb lines in Wordsworth's *The Prelude* on the statue of Sir Isaac Newton:
"The marble index of a mind forever
Voyaging through strange seas of thought alone."

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

1809 - 1894

A Boswell, writing out himself!

—HOLMES, "At a Bookstore."

*No, my friends, I go (always other things being equal) for the man who inherits
family traditions and the cumulative humanities of at least four or five generations.*

—HOLMES, *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*.

The year of Holmes's birth, 1809, is memorable for the number of great men and women born at that time: in England, Tennyson, Darwin, Gladstone, Mrs. Browning, and Fanny Kemble; on the continent, Mendelssohn and Proudhon; and in America, besides Holmes, Lincoln and Poe. (In his poem, "Autochthon," Edgar Lee Masters contrasts the lives of Darwin and Tennyson with that of Lincoln.)

Oliver Wendell Holmes, of excellent clerical and merchant stock, was born in the "old Gambrel-roofed House" in Cambridge, Mass., on August 29. His father, the Rev. Abiel Holmes, author of *American Annals* (1805), was minister of the First Church in Boston in the days before it became Unitarian. The young Holmes did not long share the Calvinistic views of his father, who wished the son to become a minister. In later life Holmes remarked: "I might have become a minister myself, for aught I know, if [a certain clergyman] had not looked and talked so like an undertaker." By the time Holmes entered Harvard College, it had become Unitarian; and he found there influences hostile to his father's orthodoxy. Like Emerson and Parkman, Holmes was always in rebellion against Calvinistic theology.

After his graduation in 1829, Holmes, like Lowell, not knowing what else to do, studied law for a year, and then decided to become a physician. This was at a time when, as readers of George Eliot's *Middlemarch* will remember, medicine was just beginning to be a science and carried with it no very high social standing. Holmes spent two years (1833-1835) in medical study in Paris. It is generally supposed that his stay abroad had little effect upon the young New Englander, but there are times when his wit and his scepticism remind one of the great Voltaire. Holmes did not long practice medicine. From 1838 to 1840 he was Professor of Anatomy at Dartmouth College. For years he taught the same subject at Harvard and did not finally retire until 1882. He was an excellent teacher. (See the essay, "Oliver Wendell Holmes," in President C. W. Eliot's *A Late Harvest*.) The last class period in the morning schedule was always given to Holmes because he was the only instructor who could hold the attention of the weary students. A certain Dr. Cheever, one of Holmes's former students, gives some account of Holmes's methods of teaching:

"He enters, and is greeted with a mighty shout and stamp of applause. Then silence, and there begins a charming hour of description, analysis, simile, anecdote, harmless pun, which clothes the dry bones with poetic imagery, enlivens a hard and fatiguing day with humor, and brightens to the tired listener the details of a difficult though interesting study."

Holmes took a very keen interest in professional matters and was active in forming the American Medical Association. His best claim to medical research, an essay on "The Contagiousness of Puerperal Fever," was published in 1843. For years Holmes regarded himself as a physician and teacher rather than as a man of letters. The student who knows something of medicine will find Holmes's medical poems and essays worth reading.

Until he was nearly fifty, Holmes wrote little besides occasional verse. A poem, "Old Ironsides," written soon after his graduation, was widely copied. He published a volume of *Poems* in 1836. Still earlier, in 1831 and 1832, he had published in *The New England Magazine* two *Autocrat* essays, but he did not write others until 1857. Until that year he was known, outside of professional circles, as a charming talker, a lyceum lecturer, and a writer of occasional verse. When James Russell Lowell undertook the editorship of the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1857, he "made it a condition precedent" that Holmes should be "the first contributor to be engaged." Holmes, who felt himself "outside of the charmed circle drawn around the scholars and poets of Cambridge and Concord," was surprised at Lowell's insistence. He awoke, as he says, from "a kind of literary lethargy"; and the first result was the series of papers which, after their publication in the *Atlantic*, made up his book, *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* (1858). Other books in the series followed: *The Professor at the Breakfast Table* (1860); *The Poet at the Breakfast Table* (1872); and *Over the Teacups* (1891). Holmes's "medicated novels" are of much the same type as the Breakfast Table series. The earliest and best is *Elsie Venner* (1861).

With the possible exception of Lowell, Holmes was the most brilliant talker in the New England group. Lowell himself in later life wrote from London: "I have never seen society, on the whole, so good as I used to meet at our Saturday Club." Holmes's conversation tended to monologue. "Now, James, let me talk and don't interrupt me," he said on one occasion when Lowell was critical. His conversation was perhaps better than his books, but it was of the same quality. How one would like to have heard the little man—he was only five feet three inches

tall—discussing the intellectual supremacy of Boston or the latest fad in medicine or his hobbies, boxing and horse-racing!

Holmes was thoroughly aristocratic and provincial, but not in an objectionable way. He was abroad only twice in his life, and his asthma kept him from traveling widely in his own country. He was, with the possible exception of Lowell, the best representative in literature of that "Brahmin Caste of New England" which he describes so well in the first chapter of *Elsie Venner*. The kind of prose and verse which he wrote could hardly have come from any other than a cultivated, aristocratic society such as was found in Boston.

"In Holmes's make-up," says his biographer, John T. Morse, Jr., "conservatism in things political and social was curiously compounded with the progressive tendency in religious thought." He was not greatly in sympathy with the reform projects of his friend Lowell. (See his long letter to Lowell, November 29, 1846, in Morse's *Life and Letters*, I, 295-303.) His father had lived in Georgia, and Holmes—although the Civil War roused him to fiery patriotism—took no active part in the Abolition movement. He lived to write a life of Emerson for the American Men of Letters series, but he was too little the mystic and idealist to have any strong sympathy with Transcendentalism. In literary matters he was conservative also. He was not greatly impressed by the intense literary nationalism of the 'twenties and 'thirties. A writer in the *Quarterly Review* says:

"When young America demanded that the political revolution which separated the Old and the New Worlds should have its literary counterpart in a similar revolt, Holmes threw all his influence into the opposite scale. He urged, with keen satire as well as with the force of example, that even a Republic must recognize the laws of conventional decorum, and that those who enter the Temple of the Muses outrage propriety if they ostentatiously flaunt their working-dress."

From such a writer one could not expect approval of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*.

Holmes's reputation has suffered from indiscriminating and over-patriotic American critics who might have profited from Lowell's warning in the case of Bryant:

*"But, my friends, you'll endanger the life of your client,
By attempting to stretch him up into a giant."*

Holmes is not a major figure in our literature, for the literary types which he wrote are not major but distinctly minor. *Vers de société* and occasional verse may be altogether delightful reading, but their poetic quality, as he well knew, is seldom high. In Holmes's lifetime Frederick Locker-Lampson, in the preface to his admirable *Lyra Elegantiarum: A Collection of Some of the Best Vers de Société and Vers d'Occasion in the English Language*, referred to Holmes as "perhaps the best living writer of this species of verse." On August 3, 1865, Holmes wrote to Lowell in regard to his own occasional verse:

"I hold it to be a gift of a certain value to be able to give that slight passing spasm of pleasure which a few ringing couplets often cause, read at the right moment. Though they are for the most part to poetry as the beating of a drum or the tinkling of a triangle is to the harmony of a band, yet it is not everybody who can get their limited significance out of these humble instruments."

Vers de société, although successfully written by many English and American poets, has no generally accepted English name. It has been variously called "familiar verse," "gentle verse,"

"patrician rhymes," etc. No one has defined the term better than did Locker-Lampson in the preface to his *Lyra Elegantiarum*:

"In his [the Editor's] judgment genuine *vers de société* and *vers d'occasion* should be short, elegant, refined, and fanciful, not seldom distinguished by chastened sentiment, and often playful. The tone should not be pitched high; it should be idiomatic, and rather in the conversational key; the rhythm should be crisp and sparkling, and the rhyme frequent and never forced, while the entire poem should be marked by tasteful moderation, high finish, and completeness. . . .

". . . the two qualities of brevity and buoyancy are absolutely essential. The poem may be tintured with a well-bred philosophy, it may be gay and gallant, it may be playfully malicious or tenderly ironical, it may display lively banter, and it may be sarcastically facetious; it may even, considering it merely as a work of art, be pagan in its philosophy, or trifling in its tone, but it must never be ponderous or commonplace."

The standard editions of Holmes's works are the Riverside (1891) for his prose and the Cambridge (1895) for his poems. The standard biography is *The Life and Letters of Oliver Wendell Holmes* (1896) in two volumes by John T. Morse, Jr. A later and briefer life is M. A. DeWolfe Howe, *Holmes of the Breakfast Table* (1939). See also Mr. Howe's *Memories of a Hostess* (1922), Chapter III, "Dr. Holmes, the Friend and Neighbor." Catherine Drinker Bowen's *Yankee from Olympus: Justice O. W. Holmes and His Family* (1944) gives a vivid but not very sympathetic picture of Dr. Holmes. S. I. Hayakawa and Howard Mumford Jones (eds.), *Oliver Wendell Holmes: Representative Selections* (1939), in the American Writers Series, contains a good working bibliography and an excellent introductory essay. In *The Psychiatric Novels of Oliver Wendell Holmes* (2nd ed., 1946) Dr. Clarence P. Oberndorf has emphasized the modernness of Dr. Holmes's studies in a field little known in his time.

LETTERS

Of letter-writing Holmes wrote to a friend: "It always comes a little hard for me to put my thoughts on paper for a friend. It is so much slower than talking! That I am more at home in; and there is always so much more in the response of bright mobile features than in the blank stare of a sheet of white paper." Of the letter to Aldrich given below, Ferris Greenslet remarks in his life of Aldrich: "In its mingled urbanity and penetration it is a model letter from a middle-aged author to a young one." In an address at the *Atlantic* breakfast given to Holmes December 3, 1879, Aldrich refers to this letter:

"It is safe to say that within the last twenty-five years no fewer than five thousand young American poets have handsomely availed themselves of Dr. Holmes's

amiability, and sent him copies of their first book. And I honestly believe that Dr. Holmes has written to each of these immortals a note full of the keenest appreciation and the wisest counsel. I have seen a score of such letters from his busy pen, and—shall I confess it?—I have one in my own possession. Twenty years ago I printed a volume of boyish verse; the first copy that came from the binder's was dispatched to the Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table—as if he had been waiting for it. In return I received the kindest letter ever written by a celebrity to an obscurity. It virtually told me not to make any more verses unless I could make better ones. It told me this, but with such delicate frankness of phrase that it seemed to me as if the writer had laid his hand in tender reproof upon my shoulder, as an elder brother might have done."

TO THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH*

[1859?]

MY DEAR MR. ALDRICH,—Thank you very sincerely for your book of blossoms. I have just been reading them and find them dewy and sweet-scented. “Babie Bell” has most of your heart’s color in it. “When the Sultan goes to Ispahan” is *espiègle*,¹ lively, poetical—“the moons of their full brown bosoms” is succulent and musky. “The Lunch” is a little Keatsy, but very neatly carved and colored. “Dawn” and “morn,” p 20, “dawning” and “morning,” p. 46, are, as some kind friend has told you before this, inadmissible cockneyisms. This utterance is Rhadamanthine. You must not feed too much on “apricots and dewberries.” There is an exquisite sensuousness that shows through your words and rounds them into voluptuous swells of rhythm as “invisible fingers of air” lift the diaphanous gauzes. Do not let it run away with you You love the fragrance of certain words so well that you are in danger of making nose-gays when you should write poems.

There are two dangers that beset young poets—young American poets at least. The first is being spoiled by the praise of women; the second being disgusted by the praise or blame—it makes little difference which—of the cheap critics. You may have noticed that our poets do not commonly ripen well,—they are larks in the morning, sparrows at noon, and owls before evening. One reason is that our shallow universal culture is wanting in severe standards of taste and judgment. We have no Fahrenheits and Réaumurs and centigrades to gauge our young talent with, and allow it to form false estimates of itself. Now your forte is sentiment and your danger sentimentality. You are an epicure in words and your danger is that of becoming a verbal voluptuary,—the end of which is rhythmical gout and incurable poetic disorder. Let me beg you, by your fine poetical sense, not to let the flattery of insufficient persons render you too easily contented with yourself, nor yet the hideous content of reporter-critics alienate you from the love of verse (which does not seem to thrive so naturally and spontaneously as art in your great city [New

York]), nor lastly your tendency to vanilla-flavored adjectives and patchouli-scented participles stifle your strength in cloying euphemisms.

It would have been cheaper to praise without reading than to prose after doing it. Still, I think you will take these few words kindly, for they are really complimentary,—much more so than the vague generalities with which I commonly clear my table of presentation-copies. There is so much that is sweet and true in your last lines that I want you to be fair to yourself and pinch off all the idle buds before the summer of your fruitage. These poems are most of them must, not wine. Happy man, whose voice time will be mellowing when he is cracking those of us your preterpluperfect contemporaries!

Very sincerely yours,

O. W. HOLMES.

TO JAMES T. FIELDS*

296 BEACON STREET, February 11, 1862.

MY DEAR MR. FIELDS,—On Friday evening last I white-cravated myself, took a carriage, and found myself at your door at eight of the clock P.M.

A cautious female responded to my ring, and opened the chained portal about as far as a clam opens his shell to see what is going on in Cambridge Street, where he is waiting for a customer.

Her first glance impressed her with the conviction that I was a burglar. The mild address with which I accosted her removed that impression, and I rose in the moral scale to the comparatively elevated position of what the unfeeling world calls a “sneak-thief.”

By dint, however, of soft words, and that look of ingenuous simplicity by which I am so well known to you and all my friends, I coaxed her into the belief that I was nothing worse than a rejected contributor, an autograph collector, an author with a volume of poems to dispose of, or other disagreeable but not dangerous character.

She unfastened the chain, and I stood before her.

* Reprinted, by permission of the author, from John T. Morse, Jr., *The Life and Letters of Oliver Wendell Holmes*.

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¹ Frolicsome, waggish, roguish.

*I calmed her fears, and she was calm
And told*

me how you and Mrs. F. had gone to New York,
and how she knew nothing of any literary de-
bauch that was to come off under your roof, 5
but would go and call another unprotected
female who knew the past, present, and future,
and could tell me why this was thus, that I
had been lured from my fireside by the *ignis*
fatuus of a deceptive invitation.

It was my turn to be afraid, alone in the
house with two of the stronger sex; and I retired.

On reaching my home, I read my note and
found it was Friday the 16th, not the 9th, I was
invited for. . . .

Dear Mr. Fields, I shall be very happy to
come to your home on Friday evening, the 16th
February, at eight o'clock, to meet yourself and
Mrs. Fields, and hear Mr. James read his paper
on Emerson.

PROGRAMME*

(1874; 1874)

This poem, which was written to introduce
Holmes's *Songs of Many Seasons* (1874), is placed
first because it indicates so well the circumstances
under which many of his poems were composed.

READER—gentle—if so be
Such still live, and live for me,
Will it please you to be told
What my tenscore pages hold?

Here are verses that in spite
Of myself I needs must write,
Like the wine that oozes first
When the unsqueezed grapes have burst.

Here are angry lines, "too hard!"
Says the soldier, battle-scarred.
Could I smile his scars away
I would blot the bitter lay.

Written with a knitted brow,
Read with placid wonder now.
Throbbled such passion in my heart?
Did his wounds once really smart?

Here are varied strains that sing
All the changes life can bring,
Songs when joyous friends have met,
Songs the mourner's tears have wet.

See the banquet's dead bouquet,
Fair and fragrant in its day;
Do they read the selfsame lines,—
He that fasts and he that dines?

Year by year, like milestones placed,
Mark the record Friendship traced.
Prisoned in the walls of time
Life has notched itself in rhyme:

As its seasons slid along,
Every year a notch of song,
From the June of long ago,
When the rose was full in blow,

Till the scarlet sage has come
And the cold chrysanthemum.
Read, but not to praise or blame;
Are not all our hearts the same?

For the rest, they take their chance,—
Some may pay a passing glance;
Others,—well, they served a turn,—
Wherefore written, would you learn?

Not for glory, not for pelf,
Not, be sure, to please myself,
Not for any meaner ends,—
Always "by request of friends."

Here's the cousin of a king,—
Would I do the civil thing?
Here's the first-born of a queen;
Here's a slant-eyed Mandarin.

Would I polish off Japan?
Would I greet this famous man,
Prince or Prelate, Sheik or Shah?—
Figaro çî and Figaro là!

Would I just this once comply?—
So they teased and teased till I
(Be the truth at once confessed)
Wavered—yielded—did my best.

Turn my pages,—never mind
If you like not all you find;

* The selections from Holmes which follow are
reprinted by permission of, and by arrangement
with, the Houghton Mifflin Company.

Think not all the grains are gold
Sacramento's sand-banks hold.

Every kernel has its shell,
Every chime its harshest bell,
Every face its weariest look,
Every shelf its emptiest book,

Every field its leanest sheaf,
Every book its dullest leaf,
Every leaf its weakest line,—
Shall it not be so with mine?

Best for worst shall make amends,
Find us, keep us, leave us friends
Till, perchance, we meet again.
Benedicite.—Amen!

OLD IRONSIDES

(1830; 1830)

This poem, which is as spirited as the martial lyrics of Thomas Campbell, was written by Holmes in 1830 while he was studying law at Harvard. The historic frigate *Constitution*, which had fought the pirates in the Mediterranean and the British in the War of 1812, was about to be destroyed—as of course obsolete and worn-out warships almost invariably are. Holmes's poem, published in the Boston *Daily Advertiser* and republished in many other newspapers, helped to create a public protest which caused the order to be countermanded. Curtis Hidden Page remarks: "This is probably the only case in which a government policy was changed by the verses of a college student." The *Constitution* is still preserved as a historic relic of the early American navy.

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!
Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky;
Beneath it rung the battle shout,
And burst the cannon's roar;—
The meteor of the ocean air
Shall sweep the clouds no more.

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,
Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
And waves were white below,

No more shall feel the victor's tread,
Or know the conquered knee;—
The harpies of the shore shall pluck
The eagle of the sea!

Oh, better that her shattered hulk
Should sink beneath the wave;
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
And there should be her grave;
Nail to the mast her holy flag,
Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,
The lightning and the gale!

MY AUNT

(1831)

Cf. the chapter in Holmes's *Elsie Venner* on "The Apollinean Female Institute."

My aunt! my dear unmarried aunt!
Long years have o'er her flown,
Yet still she strains the aching clasp
That binds her virgin zone;
I know it hurts her,—though she looks
As cheerful as she can;
Her waist is ampler than her life,
For life is but a span.

My aunt! my poor deluded aunt!
Her hair is almost gray;
Why will she train that winter curl
In such a spring-like way?
How can she lay her glasses down,
And say she reads as well,
When through a double convex lens
She just makes out to spell?

Her father—grandpapa! forgive
This erring lip its smiles—
Vowed she should make the finest girl
Within a hundred miles;
He sent her to a stylish school;
'Twas in her thirteenth June;
And with her, as the rules required,
"Two towels and a spoon."

They braced my aunt against a board,
To make her straight and tall;
They laced her up, they starved her down,
To make her light and small;

They pinched her feet, they singed her hair,
They screwed it up with pins;—
Oh, never mortal suffered more
In penance for her sins

So, when my precious aunt was done,
My grandsire brought her back
(By daylight, lest some rabid youth
Might follow on the track);
"Ah!" said my grandsire, as he shook
Some powder in his pan,
"What could this lovely creature do
Against a desperate man!"

Alas! nor chariot, nor barouche,
Nor bandit cavalcade,
Tore from the trembling father's arms
His all-accomplished maid.
For her how happy had it been!
And Heaven had spared to me
To see one sad, ungathered rose
On my ancestral tree.

THE LAST LEAF

(1831 or 1832; 1833)

The poem was suggested by the sight of a well-known Boston figure, Major Thomas Melville, the paternal grandfather of Herman Melville the novelist. Holmes explains:

"His aspect among the crowds of a later generation reminded me of a withered leaf which has held to its stem through the storms of autumn and winter, and finds itself still clinging to its bough while the new growths of spring are bursting their buds and spreading their foliage all around it I make this explanation for the benefit of those who have been puzzled by the lines,

*The last leaf upon the tree
In the spring."*

As Holmes goes on to suggest, the stanzaic form perhaps owes something to the short lines in Thomas Campbell's "The Battle of the Baltic":

*"By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore."*

Holmes obviously intended that his metrical form should suggest the tapping of the old man's cane. In "My Mistress's Boots" Frederick Locker-Lampson, who has already been mentioned as an admirer of Holmes, uses the same stanza to suggest the light patter of a woman's shoes:

*"They nearly strike me dumb,
And I tremble when they come
Pit-a-pat:
This palpitation means
That these Boots are Geraldine's—
Think of that!"*

Holmes, who had outlived all the other New England writers of his time, in 1894 wrote to his publishers:

"I have lasted long enough to serve as an illustration of my own poem. . . . It was with a smile on my lips that I wrote it, I cannot read it without a sigh of tender remembrance."

In his *Fifty Years among Authors, Books and Publishers* (1884), J. C. Derby comments on Lincoln's admiration of "The Last Leaf":

"As he finished this verse [stanza], 'The mossy marbles rest,' etc., he said in his emphatic way, 'For pure pathos, in my judgment, there is nothing finer than those six lines in the English language.'"

I saw him once before,
As he passed by the door,
And again
The pavement stones resound,
As he totters o'er the ground
With his cane.

They say that in his prime,
Ere the pruning-knife of Time
Cut him down,
Not a better man was found
By the Crier on his round
Through the town.

But now he walks the streets,
And he looks at all he meets
Sad and wan,¹
And he shakes his feeble head,
That it seems as if he said,
"They are gone."

The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has prest
In their bloom,

¹ Mrs. Annie Fields quotes Holmes as saying: ". . . when . . . my first volume was about to appear, Mrs. Folsom saw the sheets and fortunately at the very last moment for correction discovered that I had made 'forlorn' rhyme with 'gone,' and out of her own head and without having time to consult with me she substituted 'sad and wan'" (Howe, *Memories of a Hostess*, p. 43).

And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.

My grandmamma has said—
Poor old lady, she is dead
Long ago—
That he had a Roman nose,
And his cheek was like a rose
In the snow;

But now his nose is thin,
And it rests upon his chin
Like a staff,
And a crook is in his back,

And a melancholy crack
In his laugh

I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
At him here;
But the old three-cornered hat,
And the breeches, and all that,
Are so queer!

And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
In the spring,
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
Where I cling.

ON LENDING A PUNCH-BOWL

(1848)

“This ‘punch-bowl,’ ” writes Holmes, “was, according to old family tradition, a *caudle-cup*. It is a massive piece of silver, its cherubs and other ornaments of coarse repoussé work, and has two handles like a loving-cup, by which it was held, or passed from guest to guest.”

This ancient silver bowl of mine, it tells of good old times,
Of joyous days and jolly nights, and merry Christmas chimes;
They were a free and jovial race, but honest, brave, and true,
Who dipped their ladle in the punch when this old bowl was new.

5

A Spanish galleon brought the bar,—so runs the ancient tale;
’Twas hammered by an Antwerp smith, whose arm was like a flail;
And now and then between the strokes, for fear his strength should fail,
He wiped his brow and quaffed a cup of good old Flemish ale.

10

’Twas purchased by an English squire to please his loving dame,
Who saw the cherubs, and conceived a longing for the same;
And oft as on the ancient stock another twig was found,
’Twas filled with caudle spiced and hot, and handed smoking round.

15

But, changing hands, it reached at length a Puritan divine,
Who used to follow Timothy, and take a little wine,
But hated punch and prelacy; and so it was, perhaps,
He went to Leyden, where he found conventicles and schnapps.

20

And then, of course, you know what’s next: it left the Dutchman’s shore
With those that in the Mayflower came,—a hundred souls and more,—
Along with all the furniture, to fill their new abodes,—
To judge by what is still on hand, at least a hundred loads.

25

’Twas on a dreary winter’s eve, the night was closing dim,
When brave Miles Standish took the bowl, and filled it to the brim;

The little Captain stood and stirred the posset with his sword,
And all his sturdy men-at-arms were ranged about the board.

5 He poured the fiery Hollands in,—the man that never feared,—
He took a long and solemn draught, and wiped his yellow beard;
And one by one the musketeers—the men that fought and prayed—
All drank as 'twere their mother's milk, and not a man afraid.

10 That night, affrighted from his nest, the screaming eagle flew,
He heard the Pequot's ringing whoop, the soldier's wild halloo;
And there the sachem learned the rule he taught to kith and kin:
"Run from the white man when you find he smells of Hollands gin!"

15 A hundred years, and fifty more, had spread their leaves and snows,
A thousand rubs had flattened down each little cherub's nose,
When once again the bowl was filled, but not in mirth or joy,—
'Twas mingled by a mother's hand to cheer her parting boy.

20 "Drink, John," she said, "'twill do you good—poor child, you'll never bear
This working in the dismal trench, out in the midnight air,
And if—God bless me!—you were hurt, 'twould keep away the chill"
So John *did* drink,—and well he wrought that night at Bunker's Hill!

25 I tell you, there was generous warmth in good old English cheer;
I tell you, 'twas a pleasant thought to bring its symbol here.
'Tis but the fool that loves excess; hast thou a drunken soul?
Thy bane is in thy shallow skull, not in my silver bowl!

30 I love the memory of the past,—its pressed yet fragrant flowers,—
The moss that clothes its broken walls, the ivy on its towers;
Nay, this poor bauble it bequeathed,—my eyes grow moist and dim,
To think of all the vanished joys that danced around its brim.

35 Then fill a fair and honest cup, and bear it straight to me;
The goblet hallows all it holds, whate'er the liquid be;
And may the cherubs on its face protect me from the sin
That dooms one to those dreadful words,—“My dear, where *have* you been?”

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS

(1858)

Holmes regarded this as his best poem, and most nineteenth-century readers agreed with him. The reader of today, however, is more likely to agree with Parrington's estimate: "*The One-Hoss Shay* is worth a volume of such pretty moralizing." It appears at the end of the fourth section of *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*. The prose paragraph which immediately precedes the poem reads in part:

"If you will look into Roget's Bridgewater Treatise, you will find a figure of one of these shells [the Pearly Nautilus], and a section of it. The last will

show you the series of enlarging compartments successively dwelt in by the animal that inhabits the shell, which is built in a widening spiral. Can you find no lesson in this?"

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main,—
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
5 In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their
streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped its growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed,—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt un-
sealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the
old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by
thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap, forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathèd horn!¹
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a
voice that sings:—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting
seal!

THE LIVING TEMPLE

(1858)

Some of Holmes's medical poems are among his best. Unfortunately, most of them are difficult for the reader who knows little of medicine. "The Living Temple," which appears in *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, is introduced as follows:

"On Sunday mornings, in obedience to a feeling I am not ashamed of, I have always tried to give a

¹ An echo of Wordsworth's sonnet, "The World Is Too Much With Us":

Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

more appropriate character to our conversation. I have never read them my sermon yet, and I don't know that I shall, as some of them might take my convictions as a personal indignity to themselves. But having read our company so much of the Professor's talk about age and other subjects connected with physical life, I took the next Sunday morning to repeat to them the following poem of his, which I have had by me some time. He calls it—I suppose, for his professional friends—THE ANATOMIST'S HYMN; but I shall name it [THE LIVING TEMPLE]."

Not in the world of light alone,
Where God has built his blazing throne,
Nor yet alone in earth below,
With belted seas that come and go,
And endless isles of sunlit green,
Is all thy Maker's glory seen:
Look in upon thy wondrous frame,—
Eternal wisdom still the same!

The smooth, soft air with pulse-like waves
Flows murmuring through its hidden caves,
Whose streams of brightening purple rush,
Fired with a new and livelier blush,
While all their burden of decay
The ebbing current steals away,
And red with Nature's flame they start
From the warm fountains of the heart.

No rest that throbbing slave may ask,
Forever quivering o'er his task,
While far and wide a crimson jet
Leaps forth to fill the woven net
Which in unnumbered crossing tides
The flood of burning life divides,
Then, kindling each decaying part,
Creeps back to find the throbbing heart.

But warmed with that unchanging flame
Behold the outward moving frame,
Its living marbles jointed strong
With glistening band and silvery thong,
And linked to reason's guiding reins
By myriad rings in trembling chains,
Each graven with the threaded zone
Which claims it as the master's own.

See how yon beam of seeming white
Is braided out of seven-hued light,
Yet in those lucid globes no ray
By any chance shall break astray.
Hark how the rolling surge of sound,

Arches and spirals circling round,
Wakes the hushed spirit through thine ear
With music it is heaven to hear.

Then mark the cloven sphere that holds
All thought in its mysterious folds;
That feels sensation's faintest thrill,
And flashes forth the sovereign will;
Think on the stormy world that dwells
Locked in its dim and clustering cells!
The lightning gleams of power it sheds
Along its hollow glassy threads!

O Father! grant thy love divine
To make these mystic temples thine!
When wasting age and wearying strife
Have sapped the leaning walls of life,
When darkness gathers over all,
And the last tottering pillars fall,
Take the poor dust thy mercy warms,
And mould it into heavenly forms!

THE DEACON'S MASTERPIECE

OR THE WONDERFUL "ONE-HOSS SHAY"

A LOGICAL STORY

(1858)

Have you heard of the wonderful one-hoss shay,

That was built in such a logical way
It ran a hundred years to a day,
And then, of a sudden, it—ah, but stay,
I'll tell you what happened without delay,
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits,—
Have you ever heard of that, I say?

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five.
Georgius Secundus was then alive,—
Snuffy old drone from the German hive.
That was the year when Lisbon-town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down,
And Braddock's army was done so brown,
Left without a scalp to its crown.
It was on the terrible Earthquake-day
That the Deacon finished the one-hoss shay.

Now in building of chaises, I tell you what,
There is always *somewhere* a weakest spot,—
In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill,

In panel, or crossbar, or floor, or sill,
In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace,—lurking still,
Find it somewhere you must and will,—
Above or below, or within or without,—
5 And that's the reason, beyond a doubt,
That a chaise *breaks down*, but doesn't *wear out*.

But the Deacon swore (as deacons do,
10 With an "I dew vum," or an "I tell *yeou*")
He would build one shay to beat the taown
'N' the keounty 'n' all the kentry roaun';
It should be so built that it *couldn't* break
daown:

15 "Fur," said the Deacon, "'t's mighty plain
Thut the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain;
'N' the way t' fix it, uz I maintain, is only jest
T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."

20 So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
Where he could find the strongest oak,
That couldn't be split nor bent nor broke,—
That was for spokes and floor and sills;
He sent for lancewood to make the thills;
25 The crossbars were ash, from the straightest
trees,

The panels of white-wood, that cuts like cheese,
But lasts like iron for things like these;
The hubs of logs from the "Settler's ellum,"—
30 Last of its timber,—they couldn't sell 'em,
Never an axe had seen their chips,
And the wedges flew from between their lips,
Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips;
Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw,
35 Spring, tire, axle, and linchpin too,
Steel of the finest, bright and blue;
Thoroughbrace bison-skin, thick and wide;
Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide
Found in the pit when the tanner died.
40 That was the way he "put her through."
"There!" said the Deacon, "naow she'll dew!"

Do! I tell you, I rather guess
She was a wonder, and nothing less!
45 Colts grew horses, beards turned gray,
Deacon and deaconess dropped away,
Children and grandchildren—where were they?
But there stood the stout old one-hoss shay
As fresh as on Lisbon-earthquake-day!

50 EIGHTEEN HUNDRED;—it came and found
The Deacon's masterpiece strong and sound

Eighteen hundred increased by ten;—
 "Hahnsum kerridge" they called it then.
 Eighteen hundred and twenty came,—
 Running as usual; much the same.
 Thirty and forty at last arrive,
 And then come fifty, and FIFTY-FIVE.

Little of all we value here
 Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
 Without both feeling and looking queer.
 In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,
 So far as I know, but a tree and truth.
 (This is a moral that runs at large;
 Take it.—You're welcome—No extra charge.)

FIRST OF NOVEMBER,—the earthquake-day,—
 There are traces of age in the one-hoss shay,
 A general flavor of mild decay,
 But nothing local, as one may say.
 There couldn't be,—for the Deacon's art
 Had made it so like in every part
 That there wasn't a chance for one to start.
 For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,
 And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
 And the panels just as strong as the floor,
 And the whipple-tree neither less nor more,
 And the back crossbar as strong as the fore,
 And spring and axle and hub *encore*.
 And yet, *as a whole*, it is past a doubt
 In another hour it will be *worn out*!

First of November, 'Fifty-five!
 This morning the parson takes a drive.
 Now, small boys, get out of the way!
 Here comes the wonderful one-hoss shay,
 Drawn by a rat-tailed, ewe-necked bay.
 "Huddup!" said the parson.—Off went they.
 The parson was working his Sunday's text,—
 Had got to *fifthly*, and stopped perplexed
 And what the—Moses—was coming next.
 All at once the horse stood still,
 Close by the meet'n'-house on the hill.
 First a shiver, and then a thrill,
 Then something decidedly like a spill,—
 And the parson was sitting upon a rock,
 At half past nine by the meet'n'-house clock,—
 Just the hour of the Earthquake shock!

What do you think the parson found,
 When he got up and stared around?
 The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
 As if it had been to the mill and ground!

You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
 How it went to pieces all at once,—
 All at once, and nothing first,—
 Just as bubbles do when they burst.

5 End of the wonderful one-hoss shay
 Logic is logic. That's all I say.

CONTENTMENT

(1858)

15 This poem, which also appears in *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, was probably influenced by John Quincy Adams's poem, "The Wants of Man," which begins.

20 "Man wants but little here below,
 Nor wants that little long."
 'Tis not with me exactly so;
 But 'tis so in the song
 My wants are many, and, if told,
 Would muster many a score;
 And were each wish a mint of gold,
 25 I still should long for more.

30 What first I want is daily bread—
 And canvas-backs—and wine—
 And all the realms of nature spread
 Before me, when I dine.
 Four courses scarcely can provide
 My appetite to quell,
 With four choice cooks from France beside
 To dress my dinner well.

35 In his *History of American Literature* Percy H. Boynton suggests that Holmes's satire is directed against Thoreau

"Man wants but little here below."

40 Little I ask; my wants are few;
 I only wish a hut of stone
 (A *very plain* brown stone will do)
 That I may call my own;—
 And close at hand is such a one,
 45 In yonder street that fronts the sun.

50 Plain food is quite enough for me;
 Three courses are as good as ten;—
 If Nature can subsist on three,
 Thank Heaven for three. Amen!
 I always thought cold victual nice;—
 My *choice* would be vanilla-ice.

I care not much for gold or land,—
 Give me a mortgage here and there,—
 Some good bank-stock, some note of hand
 Or trifling railroad share,—
 I only ask that Fortune send
 A *little* more than I shall spend.

Honors are silly toys, I know,
 And titles are but empty names;
 I would, *perhaps*, be Plenipo,—
 But only near St. James;
 I'm very sure I should not care
 To fill our Gubernator's chair.

Jewels are baubles; 'tis a sin
 To care for such unfruitful things,—
 One good-sized diamond in a pin,—
 Some, *not so large*, in rings,—
 A ruby, and a pearl, or so,
 Will do for me;—I laugh at show.

My dame should dress in cheap attire
 (Good, heavy silks are never dear);—
 I own perhaps I *might* desire
 Some shawls of true Cashmere,—
 Some narrowy crapes of China silk,
 Like wrinkled skins on scalded milk.

I would not have the horse I drive
 So fast that folks must stop and stare;
 An easy gait—two forty-five—
 Suits me; I do not care;—
 Perhaps, for just a *single spurt*,
 Some seconds less would do no hurt.

Of pictures, I should like to own
 Titians and Raphaels three or four,—
 I love so much their style and tone,
 One Turner, and no more
 5 (A landscape,—foreground golden dirt,—
 The sunshine painted with a squirt).

Of books but few,—some fifty score
 For daily use, and bound for wear;
 10 The rest upon an upper floor;—
 Some *little* luxury *there*
 Of red morocco's gilded gleam
 And vellum rich as country cream.

Busts, cameos, gems,—such things as these,
 Which others often show for pride,
 I value for their power to please,
 And selfish churls deride;—
 One Stradivarius, I confess,
 20 Two Meerschaums, I would fain possess.

Wealth's wasteful tricks I will not learn,
 Nor ape the glittering upstart fool;—
 Shall not carved tables serve my turn,
 25 But *all* must be of buhl?
 Give grasping pomp its double share,—
 I ask but *one* recumbent chair.

Thus humble let me live and die,
 30 Nor long for Midas' golden touch;
 If Heaven more generous gifts deny,
 I shall not miss them *much*,—
 Too grateful for the blessing lent
 Of simple tastes and mind content!

THE BOYS

(1859; 1859)

For nearly forty years Holmes brought to the annual reunion of his class (Harvard, 1829), a poem written for the occasion. Perhaps the best of these are "The Boys" and "Bill and Joe." For the members of Holmes's class, see the Cambridge edition of his poems; see also M. A. DeWolfe Howe, *Memories of a Hostess*, pp. 46-47.

Has there any old fellow got mixed with the boys?
 If there has, take him out, without making a noise.
 Hang the Almanac's cheat and the Catalogue's spitel
 Old Time is a liar! We're twenty to-night!

5

We're twenty! We're twenty! Who says we are more?
 He's tipsy,—young jackanapes!—show him the door!
 "Gray temples at twenty?"—Yes! *white* if we please;
 Where the snow-flakes fall thickest there's nothing can freeze!

Was it snowing I spoke of? Excuse the mistake!
 Look close,—you will see not a sign of a flake!
 We want some new garlands for those we have shed—
 And these are white roses in place of the read.

5

We've a trick, we young fellows, you may have been told,
 Of talking (in public) as if we were old:—
 That boy we call "Doctor," and this we call "Judge";¹
 It's a neat little fiction,—of course it's all fudge.

10

That fellow's the "Speaker."²—the one on the right;
 "Mr. Mayor,"³ my young one, how are you to-night?
 That's our "Member of Congress,"⁴ we say when we chaff;
 There's the "Reverend"⁵ What's his name?—don't make me laugh.

15

That boy⁶ with the grave mathematical look
 Made believe he had written a wonderful book,
 And the ROYAL SOCIETY thought it was *true*!
 So they chose him right in; a good joke it was, too!

20

There's a boy,⁷ we pretend, with a three-decker brain,
 That could harness a team with a logical chain;
 When he spoke for our manhood in syllabled fire,
 We called him "The Justice," but now he's "The Squire."

25

And there's a nice youngster of excellent pith,—
 Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith;⁸
 But he shouted a song for the brave and the free,—
 Just read on his medal, "My country," "of thee!"

30

You hear that boy laughing?—You think he's all fun:
 But the angels laugh, too, at the good he has done;
 The children laugh loud as they troop to his call,
 And the poor man that knows him laughs loudest of all!

35

Yes, we're boys,—always playing with tongue or with pen,—
 And I sometimes have asked,—Shall we ever be men?
 Shall we always be youthful, and laughing, and gay,
 Till the last dear companion drops smiling away?

40

Then here's to our boyhood, its gold and its gray!
 The stars of its winter, the dews of its May!
 And when we have done with our life-lasting toys,
 Dear Father, take care of thy children, THE BOYS!

¹ George T. Bigelow, Chief Justice of Massachusetts.

² Francis B. Crowninshield, Speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives.

³ G. W. Richardson, of Worcester, Mass.

⁴ George L. Davis.

⁵ The Rev. James Freeman Clarke.

⁶ Professor Benjamin Pierce.

⁷ B. R. Curtis, Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court

⁸ The Rev. Samuel Francis Smith, author of "America."

A SUN-DAY HYMN

(1859)

One of the best of American hymns.

Lord of all being! throned afar,
Thy glory flames from sun and star,
Centre and soul of every sphere,
Yet to each loving heart how near!

Sun of our life, thy quickening ray
Sheds on our path the glow of day,
Star of our hope, thy softened light
Cheers the long watches of the night.

Our midnight is thy smile withdrawn;
Our noontide is thy gracious dawn;
Our rainbow arch thy mercy's sign,
All, save the clouds of sin, are thine!

Lord of all life, below, above,
Whose light is truth, whose warmth is love,
Before thy ever-blazing throne
We ask no lustre of our own.

Grant us thy truth to make us free,
And kindling hearts that burn for thee,
Till all thy living altars claim
One holy light, one heavenly flame!

DOROTHY Q

A FAMILY PORTRAIT

(1871)

"Dorothy," said Holmes, "was the daughter of Judge Edmund Quincy, and the niece of Josiah Quincy, junior, the young patriot and orator who died just before the American Revolution, of which he was one of the most eloquent and effective promoters."

Grandmother's mother: her age, I guess,
Thirteen summers, or something less;
Girlish bust, but womanly air;
Smooth, square forehead with uprolled hair;
Lips that lover has never kissed;
Taper fingers and slender wrist;
Hanging sleeves of stiff brocade;
So they painted the little maid.

On her hand a parrot green
Sits unmoving and broods serene.

Hold up the canvas full in view,—
Look! there's a rent the light shines through,
Dark with a century's fringe of dust,—
That was a Red-Coat's rapier-thrust!

5 Such is the tale the lady old,
Dorothy's daughter's daughter, told.

Who the painter was none may tell,—
One whose best was not over well;

10 Hard and dry, it must be confessed,
Flat as a rose that has long been pressed,
Yet in her cheek the hues are bright,
Dainty colors of red and white,
And in her slender shape are seen
15 Hint and promise of stately mien.

Look not on her with eyes of scorn,—
Dorothy Q. was a lady born!

Ay! since the galloping Normans came,
20 England's annals have known her name;
And still to the three-hilled rebel town
Dear is that ancient name's renown,
For many a civic wreath they won,
The youthful sire and the gray-haired son.

25 O Damsel Dorothy! Dorothy Q.!
Strange is the gift that I owe to you;
Such a gift as never a king
Save to daughter or son might bring,—
30 All my tenure of heart and hand,
All my title to house and land;
Mother and sister and child and wife
And joy and sorrow and death and life!

35 What if a hundred years ago
Those close-shut lips had answered No,
When forth the tremulous question came
That cost the maiden her Norman name,
And under the folds that look so still
40 The bodice swelled with the bosom's thrill?
Should I be I, or would it be
One tenth another, to nine tenths me?

Soft is the breath of a maiden's Yes:
45 Not the light gossamer stirs with less;
But never a cable that holds so fast
Through all the battles of wave and blast,
And never an echo of speech or song
That lives in the babbling air so long!
50 There were tones in the voice that whispered
then
You may hear to-day in a hundred men.

O lady and lover, how faint and far
Your images hover,—and here we are,
Solid and stirring in flesh and bone,—
Edward's and Dorothy's—all their own,—
A goodly record for Time to show
Of a syllable spoken so long ago!—
Shall I bless you, Dorothy, or forgive
For the tender whisper that bade me live?

It shall be a blessing, my little maid!
It will heal the stab of the Red-Coat's blade,
And freshen the gold of the tarnished frame,
And gild with a rhyme your household name;
So you shall smile on us brave and bright
As first you greeted the morning's light,
And live untroubled by woes and fears
Through a second youth of a hundred years.¹

EPILOGUE TO THE BREAKFAST-TABLE SERIES

AUTOCRAT—PROFESSOR—POET
AT A BOOKSTORE
Anno Domini 1972
(1872; 1872)

A crazy bookcase, placed before
A low-price dealer's open door;
Therein arrayed in broken rows
A ragged crew of rhyme and prose,
The homeless vagrants, waifs, and strays
Whose low estate this line betrays
(Set forth the lesser birds to lime)
YOUR CHOICE AMONG THESE BOOKS I DIME!

¹ Holmes's biographer, John T. Morse, Jr., gives some verses, "which make a pretty pendant to the original poem." They were addressed to Holmes's grandniece, Dorothy Upham, whom her father had named after the original Dorothy Quincy:

Dear little Dorothy, Dorothy Q.,
What can I find to write to you?
You have two U's in your name, it's true,
And mine is adorned with a double-u,
But there's this difference in the U's,
That one you will stand a chance to lose
When a happy man of the bearded sex
Shall make it Dorothy Q. + X.

May Heaven smile bright on the blissful day
That teaches this lesson in Algebra!
When the orange blossoms crown your head,
Then read what your old great-uncle said,
And remember how in your baby-time
He scribbled a scrap of idle rhyme,—
Idle, it may be—but kindly, too,
For the little lady, Dorothy Q.!

Ho! dealer; for its motto's sake
This scarecrow from the shelf I take;
Three starveling volumes bound in one,
Its covers warping in the sun.
5 Methinks it hath a musty smell,
I like its flavor none too well,
But Yorick's brain was far from dull,
Though Hamlet pahl'd, and dropped his skull.

10 Why, here comes rain! The sky grows dark,—
Was that the roll of thunder? Hark!
The shop affords a safe retreat,
A chair extends its welcome seat,
The tradesman has a civil look
15 (I've paid, impromptu, for my book),
The clouds portend a sudden shower,—
I'll read my purchase for an hour.

.

20 What have I rescued from the shelf?
A Boswell, writing out himself!
For though he changes dress and name,
The man beneath is still the same,
Laughing or sad, by fits and starts,
25 One actor in a dozen parts,
And whatsoe'er the mask may be,
The voice assures us, *This is he.*

I say not this to cry him down;
30 I find my Shakespeare in his clown,
His rogues the selfsame parent own;
Nay! Satan talks in Milton's tone!
Where'er the ocean inlet strays,
The salt sea wave its source betrays;
35 Where'er the queen of summer blows,
She tells the zephyr, "I'm the rose!"

And his is not the playwright's page;
His table does not ape the stage;
40 What matter if the figures seen
Are only shadows on a screen,
He finds in them his lurking thought,
And on their lips the words he sought,
Like one who sits before the keys
45 And plays a tune himself to please.

And was he noted in his day?
Read, flattered, honored? Who shall say?
Poor wreck of time the wave has cast
50 To find a peaceful shore at last,
Once glorying in thy gilded name
And freighted deep with hopes of fame,

Thy leaf is moistened with a tear,
The first for many a long, long year!

For be it more or less of art
That veils the lowliest human heart
Where passion throbs, where friendship glows,
Where pity's tender tribute flows,
Where love has lit its fragrant fire,
And sorrow quenched its vain desire,
For me the altar is divine,
Its flame, its ashes,—all are mine!

And thou, my brother, as I look
And see thee pictured in thy book,
Thy years on every page confessed
In shadows lengthening from the west,
Thy glance that wanders, as it sought
Some freshly opening flower of thought,
Thy hopeful nature, light and free,
I start to find myself in thee!

.

Come, vagrant, outcast, wretch forlorn
In leather jerkin stained and torn,
Whose talk has filled my idle hour
And made me half forget the shower,
I'll do at least as much for you,
Your coat I'll patch, your guilt renew,
Read you—perhaps—some other time.
Not bad, my bargain! Price one dime!

from THE AUTOCRAT OF THE
BREAKFAST-TABLE (1857-1858)

I

I was just going to say, when I was interrupted, that one of the many ways of classifying minds is under the heads of arithmetical and algebraical intellects. All economical and practical wisdom is an extension or variation of the following arithmetical formula: $2 + 2 = 4$. Every philosophical proposition has the more general character of the expression $a + b = c$. We are mere operatives, empirics, and egotists, until we learn to think in letters instead of figures.

They all stared. There is a divinity student lately come among us to whom I commonly address remarks like the above, allowing him

to take a certain share in the conversation, so far as assent or pertinent questions are involved. He abused his liberty on this occasion by presuming to say that Leibnitz had the same observation.—No, sir, I replied, he has not. But he said a mighty good thing about mathematics, that sounds something like it, and you found it, *not in the original*, but quoted by Dr. Thomas Reid. I will tell the company what he did say, one of these days. - - -

—What are the great faults of conversation? Want of ideas, want of words, want of manners, are the principal ones, I suppose you think. I don't doubt it, but I will tell you what I have found spoil more good talks than anything else;—long arguments on special points between people who differ on the fundamental principles upon which these points depend. No men can have satisfactory relations with each other until they have agreed on certain *ultima* of belief not to be disturbed in ordinary conversation, and unless they have sense enough to trace the secondary questions depending upon these ultimate beliefs to their source. In short, just as a written constitution is essential to the best social order, so a code of finalities is a necessary condition of profitable talk between two persons. Talking is like playing on the harp; there is as much in laying the hand on the strings to stop their vibrations as in twanging them to bring out their music.

—Do you mean to say the pun-question is not clearly settled in your minds? Let me lay down the law upon the subject. Life and language are alike sacred. Homicide and *verbicide*—that is, violent treatment of a word with fatal results to its legitimate meaning, which is its life—are alike forbidden. Manslaughter, which is the meaning of the one, is the same as man's laughter, which is the end of the other. A pun is *prima facie* an insult to the person you are talking with. It implies utter indifference to or sublime contempt for his remarks, no matter how serious. I speak of total depravity, and one says all that is written on the subject is deep raving. I have committed my self-respect by talking with such a person. I should like to commit him, but cannot, because he is a nuisance. Or I speak of geological convulsions, and he asks me what was the cosine of Noah's ark; also, whether the Deluge was not a deal huger than any modern inundation.

A pun does not commonly justify a blow in return. But if a blow were given for such cause, and death ensued, the jury would be judges both of the facts and of the pun, and might, if the latter were of an aggravated character, return a verdict of justifiable homicide. Thus, in a case lately decided before Miller, J., Doe presented Roe a subscription paper, and urged the claims of suffering humanity. Roe replied by asking, When charity was like a top? It was in evidence that Doe preserved a dignified silence. Roe then said, "When it begins to hum." Doe then—and not till then—struck Roe, and his head happening to hit a bound volume of the Monthly Rag-Bag and Stolen Miscellany, intense mortification ensued, with a fatal result. The chief laid down his notions of the law to his brother justices, who unanimously replied, "Jest so." The chief rejoined, that no man should jest so without being punished for it, and charged for the prisoner, who was acquitted, and the pun ordered to be burned by the sheriff. The bound volume was forfeited as a deodand, but not claimed.

People that make puns are like wanton boys that put coppers on the railroad tracks. They amuse themselves and other children, but their little trick may upset a freight train of conversation for the sake of a battered witticism. - - -

—What if, instead of talking this morning, I should read you a copy of verses, with critical remarks by the author? Any of the company can retire that like.

ALBUM VERSES

*When Eve had led her lord away,
And Cain had killed his brother,
The stars and flowers, the poets say,
Agreed with one another,*

*To cheat the cunning tempter's art,
And teach the race its duty,
By keeping on its wicked heart
Their eyes of light and beauty.*

*A million sleepless lids, they say,
Will be at least a warning;
And so the flowers would watch by day,
The stars from eve to morning.*

*On hill and prairie, field and lawn,
Their dewy eyes upturning,
The flowers still watch from reddening dawn
Till western skies are burning.*

*Alas! each hour of daylight tells
A tale of shame so crushing,
That some turn white as sea-bleached shells,
And some are always blushing.*

*But when the patient stars look down
On all their light discovers,
The traitor's smile, the murderer's frown,
The lips of lying lovers,*

*They try to shut their saddening eyes,
And in the vain endeavor
We see them twinkling in the skies,
And so they wink forever.*

What do you think of these verses, my friends?—Is that piece an impromptu? said my landlady's daughter. (Aet. 19+ Tender-eyed blonde. Long ringlets. Cameo pin. Gold pencil-case on a chain. Locket. Bracelet. Album Auto-graph Book. Accordeon. Reads Byron, Tupper, and Sylvanus Cobb, Junior, while her mother makes the puddings. Says "Yes?" when you tell her anything.)—*Oui et non, ma petite*,—Yes and no, my child. Five of the seven verses were written offhand; the other two took a week,—that is, were hanging round the desk in a ragged, forlorn, unrhymed condition as long as that. All poets will tell you just such stories. *C'est le DERNIER pas qui coûte*¹ Don't you know how hard it is for some people to get out of a room after their visit is really over? They want to be off, and you want to have them off, but they don't know how to manage it. One would think they had been built in your parlor or study, and were waiting to be launched. I have contrived a sort of ceremonial inclined plane for such visitors, which being lubricated with certain smooth phrases, I back them down, metaphorically speaking, stern-foremost, into their "native element," the great ocean of out-doors. Well, now, there are poems as hard to get rid of as these rural visitors. They come in glibly, use up all the serviceable rhymes, *day, ray, beauty, duty, skies, eyes, other, brother, mountain, fountain*, and the like; and so they go on until you think it is time for the wind-up, and the wind-up won't come on any terms. So they lie about until you get sick of the sight of them, and end by thrusting some cold scrap of a final couplet upon them, and turning them out of

¹ It is the last step which is difficult.

doors. I suspect a good many "impromptus" could tell just such a story as the above—Here turning to our landlady, I used an illustration which pleased the company much at the time, and has since been highly commended "Madam," I said, "you can pour three gills and three quarters of honey from that pint jug, if it is full, in less than one minute, but, Madam, you could not empty that last quarter of a gill, though you were turned into a marble Hebe, and held the vessel upside down for a thousand years "

One gets tired to death of the old, old rhymes, such as you see in that copy of verses,—which I don't mean to abuse, or to praise either. I always feel as if I were a cobbler, putting new top-leathers to an old pair of boot-soles and bodies, when I am fitting sentiments to these venerable jingles.

.	.	.	.	.	.	youth
.	.	.	.	.	.	morning
.	.	.	.	.	.	truth
.	.	.	.	.	.	warning.

Nine tenths of the "Juvenile Poems" written spring out of the above musical and suggestive coincidences.

"Yes?" said our landlady's daughter.

I did not address the following remark to her, and I trust, from her limited range of reading, she will never see it; I said it softly to my next neighbor.

When a young female wears a flat circular side-curl, gummed on each temple,—when she walks with a male, not arm in arm, but his arm against the back of hers,—and when she says "Yes?" with the note of interrogation, you are generally safe in asking her what wages she gets, and who the "feller" was you saw her with.

"What were you whispering?" said the daughter of the house, moistening her lips, as she spoke, in a very engaging manner.

"I was only laying down a principle of social diagnosis."

"Yes?" - - -

—Self-made men?—Well, yes. Of course every body likes and respects self-made men. It is a great deal better to be made in that way than not to be made at all. Are any of you younger people old enough to remember that Irishman's house on the marsh at Cambridgeport, which house he built from drain to chimney-top with his own hands? It took him a good many years to

build it, and one could see that it was a little out of plumb, and a little wavy in outline, and a little queer and uncertain in general aspect. A regular hand could certainly have built a better house; but it was a very good house for a "self-made" carpenter's house, and people praised it, and said how remarkably well the Irishman had succeeded. They never thought of praising the fine blocks of houses a little farther on.

Your self-made man, whittled into shape with his own jack-knife, deserves more credit, if that is all, than the regular engine-turned article, shaped by the most approved pattern, and French-polished by society and travel. But as to saying that one is every way the equal of the other, that is another matter. The right of strict social discrimination of all things and persons, according to their merits, native or acquired, is one of the most precious republican privileges. I take the liberty to exercise it when I say that, *other things being equal*, in most relations of life I prefer a man of family.

What do I mean by a man of family?—O I'll give you a general idea of what I mean. Let us give him a first-rate fit out; it costs us nothing.

Four or five generations of gentlemen and gentlewomen; among them a member of his Majesty's Council for the Province, a Governor or so, one or two Doctors of Divinity, a member of Congress, not later than the time of long boots with tassels.

Family portraits. The member of the Council, by Smibert. The great merchant-uncle, by Copley, full length, sitting in his arm-chair, in a velvet cap and flowered robe, with a globe by him, to show the range of his commercial transactions, and letters with large red seals lying round, one directed conspicuously to The Honorable, etc., etc. Greatgrandmother, by the same artist; brown satin, lace very fine, hands superlative; grand old lady, stiffish, but imposing. Her mother, artist unknown; flat, angular, hanging sleeves; parrot on fist. A pair of Stuarts;² viz., 1. A superb, full-blown, mediæval

² Barrett Wendell points out the fact that, according to Holmes's test, such men of family must have been very few in Boston: "The men whom Copley painted were mostly ruined by the Revolution; the men whom Stuart painted were those who, as the country subsided into peace, were able to establish fortunes which have lasted" (*A Literary History of America*, 1900, p. 242).

gentleman, with a fiery dash of Tory blood in his veins, tempered down with that of a fine old rebel grandmother, and warmed up with the best of old India Madeira; his face is one flame of ruddy sunshine; his ruffled shirt rushes out of his bosom with an impetuous generosity, as if it would drag his heart after it; and his smile is good for twenty thousand dollars to the Hospital, besides ample bequests to all relatives and dependants. 2. Lady of the same, remarkable cap, high waist, as in time of Empire; bust à la *Josephine*, wisps of curls, like celery-tips, at sides of forehead; complexion clear and warm, like rose-cordial. As for the miniatures by Malbone, we don't count them in the gallery.

Books, too, with the names of old college-students in them,—family names;—you will find them at the head of their respective classes in the days when students took rank on the catalogue from their parents' condition. Elzevirs, with the Latinized appellations of youthful progenitors, and *Hic liber est meus* on the title-page. A set of Hogarth's original plates. Pope, original edition, 15 volumes, London, 1717. Barrow on the lower shelves, in folio. Tillotson on the upper, in a little dark platoon of octodecimos.

Some family silver; a string of wedding and funeral rings, the arms of the family curiously blazoned, the same in worsted, by a maiden aunt.

If a man of family has an old place to keep these things in, furnished with claw-footed chairs and black mahogany tables, and tall bevel-edged mirrors, and stately upright cabinets, his outfit is complete.

No, my friends, I go (always, other things being equal) for the man who inherits family traditions and the cumulative humanities of at least four or five generations. Above all things, as a child, he should have tumbled about in a library. All men are afraid of books, who have not handled them from infancy. Do you suppose our dear *didascalos*³ over there ever read *Poli*

³ "Our dear *didascalos*" was meant for Professor James Russell Lowell, now Minister to England. It requires the union of exceptional native gifts and generations of training to bring the "natural man" of New England to the completeness of scholarly manhood, such as that which adds new distinction to the name he bears, already remarkable for its successive generations of eminent citizens.

"Self-made" is imperfectly made, or education is a superfluity and a failure. (Author's note.)

Synopsis, or consulted *Castelli Lexicon*, while he was growing up to their stature? Not he; but virtue passed through the hem of their parchment and leather garments whenever he touched them, as the precious drugs sweated through the bat's handle in the Arabian story. I tell you he is at home wherever he smells the invigorating fragrance of Russia leather. No self-made man feels so. One may, it is true, have all the antecedents I have spoken of, and yet be a boor or a shabby fellow. One may have none of them, and yet be fit for councils and courts. Then let them change places. Our social arrangement has this great beauty, that its strata shift up and down as they change specific gravity, without being clogged by layers of prescription. But I still insist on my democratic liberty of choice, and I go for the man with the gallery of family portraits against the one with the twenty-five-cent daguerreotype, unless I find out that the last is the better of the two. - - -

II

—Have I ever acted in private theatricals? Often. I have played the part of the "Poor Gentleman," before a great many audiences,—more, I trust, than I shall ever face again. I did not wear a stage-costume, nor a wig, nor moustaches of burnt cork, but I was placarded and announced as a public performer, and at the proper hour I came forward with the ballet-dancer's smile upon my countenance, and made my bow and acted my part. I have seen my name stuck up in letters so big that I was ashamed to show myself in the place by daylight. I have gone to a town with a sober literary essay in my pocket, and seen myself everywhere announced as the most desperate of *buffos*,⁴—one who was obliged to restrain himself in the full exercise of his powers, from prudential considerations. I have been through as many hardships as Ulysses, in the pursuit of my histrionic vocation. I have travelled in cars until the conductors all knew me like a brother. I have run off the rails, and stuck all night in snow-drifts, and sat behind females that would have the window open when one could not wink without his eyelids freezing together. Perhaps I shall give you some of my experiences one of these days;—I will not now, for I have something else for you.

Private theatricals, as I have figured in them

⁴ Comic actors.

in country lyceum-halls, are one thing,—and private theatricals, as they may be seen in certain gilded and frescoed saloons of our metropolis, are another. Yes, it is pleasant to see real gentlemen and ladies, who do not think it necessary to mouth, and rant, and stride, like most of our stage heroes and heroines, in the characters which show off their graces and talents; most of all to see a fresh, unrouged, unspoiled, high-bred young maiden, with a lithe figure, and a pleasant voice, acting in those love-dramas which make us young again to look upon, when real youth and beauty will play them for us.

—Of course I wrote the prologue I was asked to write. I did not see the play, though I knew there was a young lady in it, and that somebody was in love with her, and she was in love with him, and somebody (an old tutor, I believe) wanted to interfere, and, very naturally, the young lady was too sharp for him. The play of course ends charmingly; there is a general reconciliation, and all concerned form a line and take each other's hands, as people always do after they have made up their quarrels,—and then the curtain falls,—if it does not stick, as it commonly does at private theatrical exhibitions, in which case a boy is detailed to pull it down, which he does, blushing violently.

Now, then, for my prologue. I am not going to change my cæsuras and cadences for anybody; so if you do not like the heroic, or iambic trimeter brachycatalectic, you had better not wait to hear it.

THIS IS IT

*A Prologue? Well, of course the ladies know;—
I have my doubts. No matter,—here we go!
What is a Prologue? Let our Tutor teach.
Pro means beforehand; logus stands for speech.
'Tis like the harper's prelude on the strings,
The prima donna's courtesy ere she sings.*

*"The world's a stage,"—as Shakespeare said, one day;
The stage a world—was what he meant to say,
The outside world's a blunder, that is clear;
The real world that Nature meant is here.
Here every foundling finds its lost mamma;
Each rogue, repentant, melts his stern papa;
Misers relent, the spendthrift's debts are paid,
The cheats are taken in the traps they laid;
One after one the troubles all are past
Till the fifth act comes right side up at last,
When the young couple, old folks, rogues, and all,*

*Join hands, so happy at the curtain's fall.
—Here suffering virtue ever finds relief,
And black-browed ruffians always come to grief,
—When the torn damsel, with a frantic speech,
And cheeks as hueless as a brandy-peach,
5 Cries, "Help, kynd Heaven!" and drops upon her
knees
On the green—baize,—beneath the (canvas) trees,—
See to her side avenging Valor fly:—
"Ha! Villain! Draw! Now, Terraitorr, yield or die!"
10 —When the poor hero flounders in despair,
Some dear lost uncle turns up millionaire,—
Clasps the young scapegrace with paternal joy
Sobs on his neck, "My boy! MY BOY!! MY BOY!!!"
15 Ours, then, sweet friends, the real world tonight
Of love that conquers in disaster's spite
Ladies, attend! While woful cares and doubt
Wrong the soft passion in the world without,
Though fortune scowl, though prudence interfere,
One thing is certain: Love will triumph here!
20 Lords of creation, whom your ladies rule,—
The world's great masters, when you're out of
school,—
Learn the brief moral of our evening's play:
Man has his will,—but woman has her way!
25 While man's dull spirit toils in smoke and fire,
Woman's swift instinct threads the electric wire,—
The magic bracelet stretched beneath the waves
Beats the black giant with his score of slaves
All earthly powers confess your sovereign art
30 But that one rebel,—woman's wilful heart.
All foes you master; but a woman's wit
Lets daylight through you ere you know you're hit.
So, just to picture what her art can do.
Hear an old story made as good as new.
35 Rudolph, professor of the headsman's trade,
Alike was famous for his arm and blade.
One day a prisoner Justice had to kill
Knelt at the block to test the artist's skill.
40 Bare-armed, swart-visaged, gaunt, and shaggy-browed,
Rudolph the headsman rose above the crowd.
His falchion lightened with a sudden gleam,
As the pike's armor flashes in the stream.
He sheathed his blade; he turned as if to go;
45 The victim knelt, still waiting for the blow.
"Why strikest not? Perform thy murderous act,"
The prisoner said. (His voice was slightly cracked.)
"Friend, I have struck," the artist straight replied,
"Wait but one moment, and yourself decide."
50 He held his snuff-box,—“Now then, if you please!”
The prisoner sniffed, and, with a crashing sneeze,
Off his head tumbled,—bowed along the floor,—
Bounced down the steps;—the prisoner said no more!*

Woman! thy falchion is a glittering eye;
If death lurks in it, oh, how sweet to die!
Thou takest hearts as Rudolph took the head.
We die with love, and never dream we're dead!

The prologue went off very well, as I hear. No alterations were suggested by the lady to whom it was sent, so far as I know. Sometimes people criticize the poems one sends them, and suggest all sorts of improvements.⁵ Who was that silly body that wanted Burns to alter "Scots what hae" so as to lengthen the last line, thus?—

"Edward!" *Chains and slavery*

Here is a little poem I sent a short time since to a committee for a certain celebration. I understood that it was to be a festive and convivial occasion, and ordered myself accordingly. It seems the president of the day was what is called a "teetotaler." I received a note from him in the following words, containing the copy subjoined, with the emendations annexed to it.

"Dear Sir,—your poem gives good satisfaction to the committee. The sentiments expressed with reference to liquor are not, however, those generally entertained by this community. I have therefore consulted the clergyman of this place, who has made some slight changes, which he thinks will remove all objections, and keep the valuable portions of the poem. Please to inform me of your charge for said poem. Our means are limited, etc., etc., etc.

"Yours with respect."

Here it is,—with the slight alterations.⁶

[A Convivial Song]

Come! fill a fresh bumper,—for why should we go

logwood

While the ~~nectar~~ still reddens our cups as they flow!

⁵ I remember being asked by a celebrated man of letters to let him look over an early, but somewhat elaborate poem of mine. He read the manuscript and suggested the change of one word, which I adopted in deference to his opinion. The emendation was anything but an improvement, and in later editions the passage reads as when first written. (Author's note.)

⁶ I recollect a British criticism of the poem "with the slight alterations," in which the writer was quite indignant at the treatment my convivial song had received. No committee, he thought, would dare to treat a Scotch author in that way. I could not help being reminded of Sydney Smith, and the surgical operation he proposed, in order to get a pleasantry into the head of a North Briton. (Author's note.)

decoction
Pour out the ~~rich-juices~~ still bright with the sun,

dye-stuff
5 Till o'er the brimmed crystal the ~~rubies~~ shall run.

half-ripened apples
The ~~purple-globed clusters~~ their life-dews have bled;

taste sugar of lead
10 How sweet is the ~~breath~~ of the ~~fragrance~~ they shed!

rank poisons wines / / /
For summer's ~~last roses~~ lie hid in the ~~wines~~

stable-boys smoking
That were garnered by ~~maidens who laughed~~
long-nines.

through the vines.

scowl howl scoff
20 Then a ~~smile~~, and a ~~glass~~, and a ~~toast~~, and a ~~sneer~~.

cheer,
strychnine and whiskey, and ratsbane and beer

For ~~all the good wine, and we've some of it~~
25 ~~here~~

In cellar, in pantry, in attic, in hall,

Down, down, with the tyrant that masters us all!

Long live the gay servant that laughs for us all!

30 The company said I had been shabbily treated, and advised me to charge the committee double,—which I did. But as I never got my pay, I don't know that it made much difference. I am a very particular person about having all I write printed as I write it. I require to see a proof, a revise, a re-revise, and a double re-revise, or fourth-proof rectified impression of all my productions, especially verse. A misprint kills a sensitive author. An intentional change of his text murders him. No wonder so many poets die young!

I have nothing more to report at this time, except two pieces of advice I gave to the young women at table. One relates to a vulgarism of language, which I grieve to say is sometimes heard even from female lips. The other is of more serious purport, and applies to such as contemplate a change of condition,—matrimony, in fact.

40 —The woman who "calc'lates" is lost.

Put not your trust in money, but put your money in trust. - - -

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

1807 - 1892

*O Freedom' if to me belong
Nor mighty Milton's gift divine,
Nor Marvell's wit and graceful song,
Still with a love as deep and strong
As theirs, I lay, like them, my best gifts on thy shrine.*
—WHITTIER, "Proem."

*A fervor of mind which knows no separation
'Twixt simple excitement and pure inspiration.*
—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, *A Fable for Critics*.

Whittier was the son of a Quaker farmer; he was born in the East Parish of Haverhill, Mass., on December 17, 1807—in the same year as Longfellow, whom he outlived ten years. Whittier's parents, although Quakers, held something like a leading social position in the village community; and their home, we are told, "afforded something more than the average comfort of farm life." That, however, could not have been much. As an old man, Whittier wrote to a little Pennsylvania girl who had inquired about his early life:

"I think . . . I found about equal satisfaction in an old rural home, with the shifting panorama of the seasons, in reading the few books within my reach, and dreaming of something wonderful and grand somewhere in the future: . . . I had at that time a great thirst for knowledge and little means to gratify it. The beauty of outward nature early impressed me, and the moral and spiritual beauty of the holy lives I read of in the Bible and other books also affected me with a sense of my falling short and longing for a better state."

The father had little sympathy with the young poet's literary aspirations, but his sisters encouraged him. The small family library was religious rather than literary. One of his teachers, Joshua Coffin, introduced him to the poems of Robert Burns, who proved a powerful influence, as Whittier tells us in his poem, "Burns."

It was as a local poet that Whittier began, and the wonder is that he ever became anything better. His early verses, most of which he was later ashamed of, were published in country newspapers. The young William Lloyd Garrison, not yet the fiery Abolitionist agitator, pub-

1807-1892-----JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

lished some of these, with flattering comments, in the Newburyport, Mass., *Free Press*. When Garrison took the trouble to look up the boy poet and advised him to secure an education, the elder Whittier is reported to have said, "Sir, poetry will not give him bread." But since Greenleaf had injured his health by farm work too heavy for his slender frame, the father consented to let the boy go to school. So Whittier attended the Haverhill Academy for two terms, working his way by making slippers, posting ledgers for a local merchant, and doing other odd jobs that came to hand. All the while he was writing numerous verses and printing them in local newspapers. Not being able to go to college, as practically all the other important New England writers did, he engaged in editorial work on newspapers and magazines of the lesser sort, in Boston, Hartford, and other places. Periodically, however, his health obliged him to give up his work and return to the farm to recuperate. In 1831 he published his *Legends of New England, in Prose and Verse*. His keen interest in New England history and legend was to inspire some excellent ballads in his maturer years.

Long dissatisfied with slavery, which American Quakers had consistently opposed, Whittier in 1833 engaged in the Abolition movement with all the zeal of a religious convert. When in that year he published at his own expense a pamphlet, *Justice and Expediency*, he knew that it might mean the end of his poetic career as well as of his political ambitions, which were strong. In later life the poet said to an ambitious youth, "My lad, if thou wouldst win success, join thyself to some unpopular but noble cause." In 1833, even in New England, the antislavery cause was extremely unpopular. New Englanders had no particular liking for slavery, but conservative business men did not wish to antagonize their Southern customers. Arrayed against the Abolitionists for a generation were the wealthy and the educated as well as the rank and file of the population—"mobs, Andover Seminary, and rum," as the impatient poet once summed it up. Six years after publishing *Justice and Expediency*, Whittier wrote to Elizabeth Neal:

"For myself, abolition has been to me its own 'exceeding great reward.' It has repaid every sacrifice of time, of money, of reputation, of health, of ease, with the answer of a good conscience, and the happiness which grows out of benevolent exertions for the welfare of others. It has led me to examine myself. It has given me the acquaintance of some of the noblest and best of men and women. *It owes me nothing.*"

When he first committed himself to the Abolition cause, Whittier felt that he must give up poetry. In 1833 he wrote to Jonathan Law:

"My health is vastly improved; the blues have left me; I go to husking frolics, and all that sort of thing. I have put the veto upon poetry; read all I can find, politics, history, rhyme, reason, etc., and am happy,—at least I believe I am. . . . As to your suggestion about poetry, I must decline attending to it. I have knocked Pegasus on the head, as a tanner does his bark-mill donkey, when he is past service."

It was not until later apparently that Whittier discovered how powerful a weapon his verse could be in the antislavery cause. Like Freneau—but unlike certain contemporary poets—he had no illusions about the poetic worth of verse written as propaganda for even a worthy cause. After the Civil War he wrote of his antislavery poems: "They were written with no expectation that they would survive the occasions which called them forth: they were protests,

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alarm signals, trumpet-calls to action, words wrung from the writer's heart, forged at white heat, and of course lacking the finish and careful word-selection which reflection and patient brooding might have given." A very few of his antislavery poems—notably "Massachusetts to Virginia"—have the genuine poetic quality.

Not all of Whittier's poems, however, were propaganda. He was coming to realize something of the true nature of the poetic art, and beginning to write some of his better short poems. Recognition came very slowly. Bayard Taylor wrote to E. C. Stedman in 1867: "Here is a man who has waited twenty-five years to be generally appreciated. I remember when he was never mentioned without a sneer, except by the small Abolition clique." The establishment of the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1857 with Lowell as editor gave Whittier for the first time a proper medium for the publication of his best work.

In spite of chronically poor health, Whittier proved himself one of the ablest of Abolitionist politicians. He was a shrewd judge of men and an excellent lobbyist. Anticipating the tactics of the Anti-saloon League, he kept the evasive Caleb Cushing—"General C." of *The Biglow Papers*—in a position where he had to help the cause of Abolition in spite of himself; and he was largely responsible for the arrangement that sent Charles Sumner to the Senate as Daniel Webster's successor. Eventually Whittier, like Lowell, found himself not in harmony with the more violent Abolitionists, who were willing to break up the Union in order to rid their section of the stain of slavery. Whittier deplored John Brown's ill-fated attempt to free by violence the slaves in Virginia. In 1861 the Quaker poet, like Hawthorne, was willing to let the seceding states go in peace. He wrote at the time:

*"They break the links of Union: shall we light
The fires of hell to weld anew the chains
Of that red anvil where each blow is pain?"*

After the war Whittier was for the first time free to devote his best energies to poetry. In 1866 he published *Snow-Bound*; other volumes followed in 1869 and 1870. By that time, however, his work was pretty well done. He lived on till 1892, receiving all the honors he could wish after the hardships he had gone through. He took a certain interest in other reforms, but the great passion of his life had been Abolition, and nothing else quite took its place. He was not quick to see the numerous abuses of the industrial system which now prevailed in New England. Howells in vain tried to induce him to make a public protest against the execution of the Chicago "anarchists" in 1887.

Whittier was a fighting Quaker. The witty Gail Hamilton, one of the many women who admired him, once sent him a symbolic pair of slippers on each of which "stood an American eagle, in belligerent attitude, . . . with claws full of thunderbolts"; but she "had toned down the belligerence of the spirited birds by using that most peaceable of colors, the Quaker drab!" In his later years Whittier could on occasion speak humorously of even his own zeal for reform. "The humbug of Reform," he wrote to Gail Hamilton in 1870, "is no better than other humbugs, but I am naturally inclined to think the best I can of all who claim to be trying to set the world aright." Half seriously he described himself in the Prelude to *The Tent on the Beach* (1867):

*"And one there was, a dreamer born,
Who, with a mission to fulfil,*

*Had left the Muses' haunts to turn
The crank of an opinion-mill,
Making his rustic reed of song
A weapon in the war with wrong,
Yoking his fancy to the breaking-plough,
That beam-deep turned the soil for truth to spring and grow.*

*"Too quiet seemed the man to ride
The wingèd Hippogriff Reform;
Was his a voice from side to side
To pierce the tumult of the storm?
A silent, shy, peace-loving man,
He seemed no fiery partisan
To hold his way against the public frown,
The ban of Church and State, the fierce mob's hounding down."*

Although Whittier was hardly the "philandering celibate" of Albert Mordell's biography, he was attractive to women and to men as different from himself as Dr. Holmes. He had a better sense of humor than most reformers are endowed with, although it is rarely seen in his verse. The following bit of dialogue shows how Whittier laughed his old friend and teacher, Joshua Coffin, out of a fit of religious depression:

"Joshua, don't thee hate God, who has doomed thee to everlasting torment?"

"Why, no, it is for the good of all, that some are punished."

"Joshua, thee has spent thy life doing good, and now thee is of course getting ready to do all the hurt thee can to thy fellow-men."

"No, indeed, my feelings have not changed in the least in this regard."

"Thee is going to hell, then, in this mood?"

"Why, yes, I am reconciled to the will of God, and have no ill feelings toward Him or my race."

"Now, Joshua, thee is going to hell with a heart full of love for everybody—what can the devil find for such an one as thee to do?"

In some respects Whittier was badly handicapped for a poetic career. He was color-blind as to red and green; and after middle life he was partially deaf. His was not a sensuous nature, and moral passion is almost the only one reflected in his verse. He was, however, better aware of his own limitations than were his admirers. To Francis H. Underwood, who was writing a life of him, he wrote:

"I am very grateful for thy generous estimate of my writings in 'Characteristics,' but I fear the critics will not agree with thee. Why not anticipate them, and own up to faults and limitations which everybody sees, and none more clearly than myself? Touch upon my false rhymes and Yankeeisms: confess that I sometimes 'crack the voice of melody and break the legs of time.' . . . Own that I sometimes choose unpoetical themes. Endorse Lowell's 'Fable for Critics' that I mistake occasionally simple excitement for inspiration. In this way we can take the wind out of the sails of ill-natured cavillers. I am not one of the master singers and don't pose as one. By the grace of God I am only what I am, and don't wish to pass for more."

AMERICAN RENAISSANCE-----1830-1870

Standard editions are the Cambridge edition (1894) of his poems, and the Riverside (1888), which includes both prose and verse. Many of his uncollected early poems are given in Frances Mary Pray's *A Study of Whittier's Apprenticeship as a Poet* (1930). The standard biography is by S. T. Pickard (2 vols., 1894). There are shorter lives by Francis H. Underwood (1884), T. W. Higginson (1902), G. R. Carpenter (1903), Albert Mordell (1933), and Whitman Bennett (1941). There is an excellent bibliography by T. F. Currier (1937).

PROEM

(1847)

This poem was written to serve as a poetic preface to the first collected edition of Whittier's *Poems* (1848, dated 1849). It is placed first here to show Whittier's own conception of his place as a poet.

I love the old melodious lays
Which softly melt the ages through,
The songs of Spenser's golden days,
Arcadian Sidney's silvery phrase,
Sprinkling our noon of time with freshest
morning dew.

Yet, vainly in my quiet hours
To breathe their marvellous notes I try;
I feel them, as the leaves and flowers
In silence feel the dewy showers,
And drink with glad, still lips the blessing of
the sky.

The rigor of a frozen clime,
The harshness of an untaught ear,
The jarring words of one whose rhyme
Beat often Labor's hurried time,
Or Duty's rugged march through storm and
strife, are here.

Of mystic beauty, dreamy grace,
No rounded art the lack supplies,
Unskilled the subtle lines to trace,
Or softer shades of Nature's face,
5 I view her common forms with unanointed
eyes.

Nor mine the seer-like power to show
The secrets of the heart and mind;
10 To drop the plummet-line below
Our common world of joy and woe,
A more intense despair or brighter hope to
find.

Yet here at least an earnest sense
Of human right and weal is shown;
A hate of tyranny intense,
And hearty in its vehemence,
As if my brother's pain and sorrow were my
own.

O Freedom! if to me belong
Nor mighty Milton's gift divine,
Nor Marvell's wit and graceful song,
Still with a love as deep and strong
25 As theirs, I lay, like them, my best gifts on thy
shrine!

MASSACHUSETTS TO VIRGINIA

(December, 1842; January 27, 1843)

These are perhaps the finest of Whittier's antislavery verses, whether one judges them as poetry or as journalistic propaganda. The indignant protest of the fighting Quaker here rises to genuine poetry, particularly in lines 69-84, in which the various counties of Massachusetts speak one after another. The proper names have something of the sonorous ring of Milton's famous passages in *Paradise Lost*.

An alleged fugitive slave, George Latimer, was seized in Boston on a warrant at the request

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of James B. Grey, of Norfolk, Va., who claimed him. The case caused considerable excitement and led to the presentation of a petition to Congress, signed by more than fifty thousand residents of Massachusetts, asking that the state be relieved of "all further participation in the crime of oppression." "George Latimer himself," says Whittier, "was finally given free papers for the sum of four hundred dollars." In 1851, after the passage of a more stringent fugitive slave law, Emerson wrote in his journal: "This filthy enactment was made in the nineteenth century, by people who could read and write. I will not obey it, by God."

The blast from Freedom's Northern hills, upon its Southern way,
Bears greeting to Virginia from Massachusetts Bay:
No word of haughty challenging, nor battle bugle's peal,
Nor steady tread of marching files, nor clang of horsemen's steel.

5

No trains of deep-mouthed cannon along our highways go;
Around our silent arsenals untrodden lies the snow;
And to the land-breeze of our ports, upon their errands far,
A thousand sails of commerce swell, but none are spread for war.

10

We hear thy threats, Virginia! thy stormy words and high
Swell harshly on the Southern winds which melt along our sky;
Yet not one brown, hard hand foregoes its honest labor here,
No hewer of our mountain oaks suspends his axe in fear.

15

Wild are the waves which lash the reefs along St. George's bank;
Cold on the shores of Labrador the fog lies white and dank;
Through storm, and wave, and blinding mist, stout are the hearts which man
The fishing-smacks of Marblehead, the sea-boats of Cape Ann.

20

The cold north light and wintry sun glare on their icy forms,
Bent grimly o'er their straining lines or wrestling with the storms;
Free as the winds they drive before, rough as the waves they roam,
They laugh to scorn the slaver's threat against their rocky home.

25

What means the Old Dominion? Hath she forgot the day
When o'er her conquered valleys swept the Briton's steel array?
How, side by side with sons of hers, the Massachusetts men
Encountered Tarleton's charge of fire, and stout Cornwallis, then?

30

Forgets she how the Bay State, in answer to the call
Of her old House of Burgesses, spoke out from Faneuil Hall?
When, echoing back her Henry's cry, came pulsing on each breath
Of Northern winds the thrilling sounds of "Liberty or Death!"

35

What asks the Old Dominion? If now her sons have proved
False to their father's memory, false to the faith they loved;
If she can scoff at Freedom, and its great charter spurn,
Must we of Massachusetts from truth and duty turn?

40

We hunt your bondmen, flying from Slavery's hateful hell;
Our voices, at your bidding, take up the bloodhound's yell;

We gather, at your summons, above our fathers' graves,
From Freedom's holy altar-horns to tear your wretched slaves!

5 Thank God! not yet so vilely can Massachusetts bow;
The spirit of her early time is with her even now,
Dream not because her Pilgrim blood moves slow and calm and cool,
She thus can stoop her chainless neck, a sister's slave and tool!

10 All that a sister State should do, all that a free State may,
Heart, hand, and purse we proffer, as in our early day;
But that one dark loathsome burden ye must stagger with alone,
And reap the bitter harvest which ye yourselves have sown!

15 Hold, while ye may, your struggling slaves, and burden God's free air
With woman's shriek beneath the lash, and manhood's wild despair;
Cling closer to the "cleaving curse" that writes upon your plains
The blasting of Almighty wrath against a land of chains.

20 Still shame your gallant ancestry, the cavaliers of old,
By watching round the shambles where human flesh is sold;
Gloat o'er the new-born child, and count his market value, when
The maddened mother's cry of woe shall pierce the slaver's den!

25 Lower than plummet soundeth, sink the Virginia name,
Plant, if ye will, your fathers' graves with rank weeds of shame;
Be, if ye will, the scandal of God's fair universe;
We wash our hands forever of your sin and shame and curse.

30 A voice from lips whereon the coal from Freedom's shrine hath been,
Thrilled, as but yesterday, the hearts of Berkshire's mountain men:
The echoes of that solemn voice are sadly lingering still
In all our sunny valleys, on every windswept hill.

35 And when the prowling man-thief came hunting for his prey
Beneath the very shadow of Bunker's shaft of gray,
How, through the free lips of the son, the father's warning spoke;
How, from its bonds of trade and sect, the Pilgrim city broke!

40 A hundred thousand right arms were lifted up on high,
A hundred thousand voices sent back their loud reply;
Through the thronged towns of Essex the startling summons rang,
And up from bench and loom and wheel her young mechanics sprang!

45 The voice of free, broad Middlesex, of thousands as of one,
The shaft of Bunker calling to that of Lexington;
From Norfolk's ancient villages, from Plymouth's rocky bound
To where Nantucket feels the arms of ocean close her round;

50 From rich and rural Worcester, where through the calm repose
Of cultured vales and fringing woods the gentle Nashua flows,
To where Wachuset's wintry blasts the mountain larches stir,
Swelled up to Heaven the thrilling cry of "God save Latimer!"

And sandy Barnstable rose up, wet with the salt sea spray;
 And Bristol sent her answering shout down Narragansett Bay!
 Along the broad Connecticut old Hampden felt the thrill,
 And the cheer of Hampshire's woodmen swept down from Holyoke Hill.

5

The voice of Massachusetts! Of her free sons and daughters,
 Deep calling unto deep aloud, the sound of many waters!
 Against the burden of that voice what tyrant power shall stand?
 No fetters in the Bay State! No slave upon her land!

10

Look to it well, Virginians! In calmness we have borne,
 In answer to our faith and trust, your insult and your scorn;
 You've spurned our kindest counsels; you've hunted for our lives;
 And shaken round our hearths and homes your manacles and gyves!

15

We wage no war, we lift no arm, we fling no torch within
 The fire-damps of the quaking mine beneath your soil of sin;
 We leave ye with your bondmen, to wrestle, while ye can.
 With the strong upward tendencies and godlike soul of man!

20

But for us and for our children, the vow which we have given
 For freedom and humanity is registered in heaven;
 No slave-hunt in our borders,—no pirate on our strand!
 No fetters in the Bay State,—no slave upon our land!

THE REFORMER

(1846; 1850)

"One of the poems included in the volume [*Old Portraits and Modern Sketches*] has an interest as a sort of confession of faith: for once, when asked by what poem he would wish to be most remembered, he waited a moment and then thoughtfully and seriously answered, 'I think "The Reformer" embodies my sentiments' " (Samuel T. Pickard, *Life and Letters of John Greenleaf Whittier*, I, 350-351).

5

All grim and soiled and brown with tan
 I saw a Strong One, in his wrath,
 Smiting the godless shrines of man
 Along his path.

10

The Church beneath her trembling dome
 Essayed in vain her ghostly charm:
 Wealth shook within his gilded home
 With strange alarm.

15

Fraud from his secret chambers fled
 Before the sunlight bursting in:
 Sloth drew her pillow o'er her head
 To drown the din.

20

"Spare," Art implored, "yon holy pile;
 That grand, old, time-worn turret spare;"
 Meek Reverence, kneeling in the aisle,
 Cried out, "Forbear!"

Gray-bearded Use, who, deaf and blind,
 Groped for his old accustomed stone,
 Leaned on his staff, and wept, to find
 His seat o'erthrown.

Young Romance raised his dreamy eyes,
 O'erhung with paly locks of gold,
 "Why smite," he asked in sad surprise,
 "The fair, the old?"

Yet louder rang the Strong One's stroke,
 Yet nearer flashed his axe's gleam;
 Shuddering and sick of heart I woke,
 As from a dream.

I looked: aside the dust-cloud rolled—
 The Waster seemed the Builder too;
 Upspringing from the ruined Old
 I saw the New.

'Twas but the ruin of the bad,—
 The wasting of the wrong and ill;
 Whate'er of good the old time had
 Was living still.

Calm grew the brows of him I feared;
 The frown which awed me passed away,
 And left behind a smile which cheered
 Like breaking day.

The grain grew green on battle-plains,
 O'er swarded war-mounds grazed the cow;
 The slave stood forging from his chains
 The spade and plough.

Where frowned the fort, pavilions gay
 And cottage windows, flower-entwined,
 Looked out upon the peaceful bay
 And hills behind.

Through vine-wreathed cups with wine once
 red,
 The lights on brimming crystal fell,
 Drawn, sparkling, from the rivulet head
 And mossy well.

Through prison walls, like Heaven-sent hope,
 Fresh breezes blew, and sunbeams strayed,
 And with the idle gallows-rope
 The young child played.

Where the doomed victim in his cell
 Had counted o'er the weary hours,
 Glad school-girls, answering to the bell,
 Came crowned with flowers.

Grown wiser for the lesson given,
 I fear no longer, for I know
 That, where the share is deepest driven,
 The best fruits grow.

The outworn rite, the old abuse,
 The pious fraud transparent grown,
 The good held captive in the use
 Of wrong alone,—

These wait their doom, from that great law
 Which makes the past time serve today;
 And fresher life the world shall draw
 From their decay.

Oh! backward-looking son of time!
 The new is old, the old is new,

The cycle of a change sublime
 Still sweeping through.

So wisely taught the Indian seer;
 5 Destroying Seva, forming Brahm,
 Who wake by turns Earth's love and fear,
 Are one, the same.

Idly as thou, in that old day
 10 Thou mournest, did thy sire repine;
 So, in his time, thy child grown gray,
 Shall sigh for thine.

But life shall on and upward go;
 15 Th' eternal step of Progress beats
 To that great anthem, calm and slow,
 Which God repeats.

Take heart! the Waster builds again,—
 20 A charmed life old Goodness hath;
 The tares may perish but the grain
 Is not for death.

God works in all things; all obey
 25 His first propulsion from the night:
 Wake thou and watch! the world is gray
 With morning light!

ICHABOD

(1850; 1850)

35 This poem, which is worthy of comparison with
 Browning's "The Lost Leader," expresses the dis-
 appointment of Whittier—and many other New
 Englanders—on reading the Seventh of March Speech
 in which Daniel Webster, the idol of Massachusetts,
 supported the Compromise of 1850 and the stringent
 40 Fugitive Slave Law, which was a part of it. The
 poem, in fact, does considerable injustice to Webster,
 who knew that his stand would cost him many sup-
 porters. Thinking that compromise and concession
 were preferable to war, he supported Clay's measures.
 45 Years later Whittier wrote another poem, "The Lost
 Occasion," in which, as he himself says, "I gave utter-
 ance to an almost universal regret that the great
 statesman did not live to see the flag which he loved
 trampled under the feet of Slavery, and, in view of
 this desecration, make his last days glorious in
 50 defence of 'Liberty and Union, one and inseparable.'"
 The radical never has much patience with the work-
 ings of the practical politician, even when he is a
 progressive; and the Abolitionists often found fault

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with Lincoln as well as Webster. After Webster's death Emerson wrote:

*"Why did all manly gifts in Webster fail?
He wrote on Nature's grandest brow, For Sale."*

The title of the poem is derived from I Samuel, iv, 21. "And she named the child Ichabod, saying, 'The glory is departed from Israel . . .'"

So fallen! so lost! the light withdrawn
Which once he wore!
The glory from his gray hairs gone
Forevermore!

Reville him not, the Tempter hath
A snare for all;
And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath,
Befit his fall!

Oh, dumb be passion's stormy rage,
When he who might
Have lighted up and led his age,
Falls back in night.

Scorn! would the angels laugh, to mark
A bright soul driven,
Fiend-goaded, down the endless dark,
From hope and heaven!

Let not the land once proud of him
Insult him now,
Nor brand with deeper shame his dim,
Dishonored brow.

But let its humbled sons, instead,
From sea to lake,
A long lament, as for the dead,
In sadness make.

Of all we loved and honored, naught
Save power remains;
A fallen angel's pride of thought,
Still strong in chains.

All else is gone; from those great eyes
The soul has fled:
When faith is lost, when honor dies,
The man is dead!

Then, pay the reverence of old days
To his dead fame;
Walk backward, with averted gaze,
And hide the shame!

BURNS

ON RECEIVING A SPRIG OF HEATHER IN BLOSSOM

(1854)

Without going so far as to call Whittier the American Burns, one may call attention to a certain similarity between his work and that of Burns. The nature of Burns's influence upon Whittier is suggested in the poem. Whittier tells us in a prose piece entitled "Yankee Gypsies" that he owed his first introduction to Burns's songs to "a 'pawky auld carle' of a wandering Scotchman," who, after eating his bread and cheese and drinking his mug of cider, sang "Bonny Doon," "Highland Mary," and "Auld Lang Syne" in "a rich, full voice." Elsewhere Whittier writes:

"When I was fourteen years old my first schoolmaster, Joshua Coffin, the able, eccentric historian of Newbury, brought with him to our house a volume of Burns's poems, from which he read, greatly to my delight. I begged him to leave the book with me, and set myself at once to the task of mastering the glossary of the Scottish dialect at its close. This was about the first poetry I had ever read (with the exception of that of the Bible, of which I had been a close student), and it had a lasting influence upon me. I began to make rhymes myself, and to imagine stories and adventures."

No more these simple flowers belong
To Scottish maid and lover;
Sown in the common soil of song,
They bloom the wide world over.

In smiles and tears, in sun and showers,
The minstrel and the heather,
The deathless singer and the flowers
He sang of live together.

Wild heather-bells and Robert Burns!
The moorland flower and peasant!
How, at their mention, memory turns
Her pages old and pleasant!

The gray sky wears again its gold
And purple of adorning,
And manhood's noonday shadows hold
The dews of boyhood's morning.

The dews that washed the dust and soil
From off the wings of pleasure,
The sky, that flecked the ground of toil
With golden threads of leisure

I call to mind the summer day,
The early harvest mowing,
The sky with sun and clouds at play,
And flowers with breezes blowing.

I hear the blackbird in the corn,
The locust in the haying;
And, like the fabled hunter's horn,
Old tunes my heart is playing.

How oft that day, with fond delay,
I sought the maple's shadow,
And sang with Burns the hours away,
Forgetful of the meadow!

Bees hummed, birds twittered, overhead
I heard the squirrels leaping,
The good dog listened while I read,
And wagged his tail in keeping.

I watched him while in sportive mood
I read "*The Twa Dogs*" story,
And half believed he understood
The poet's allegory.

Sweet day, sweet songs! The golden hours
Grew brighter for that singing,
From brook and bird and meadow flowers
A dearer welcome bringing.

New light on home-seen Nature beamed,
New glory over Woman;
And daily life and duty seemed
No longer poor and common.

I woke to find the simple truth
Of fact and feeling better
Than all the dreams that held my
youth
A still repining debtor:

That Nature gives her handmaid, Art,
The themes of sweet discoursing;
The tender idyls of the heart
In every tongue rehearsing.

Why dream of lands of gold and pearl,
Of loving knight and lady,
When farmer boy and barefoot girl
Were wandering there already?

I saw through all familiar things
The romance underlying;

The joys and griefs that plume the wings
Of Fancy skyward flying.

5 I saw the same blithe day return,
The same sweet fall of even,
That rose on wooded Craigie-burn,
And sank on crystal Devon.

10 I matched with Scotland's heathery hills
The sweetbrier and the clover;
With Ayr and Doon, my native rills,
Their wood hymns chanting over.

15 O'er rank and pomp, as he had seen,
I saw the Man uprising;
No longer common or unclean,
The child of God baptizing!

20 With clearer eyes I saw the worth
Of life among the lowly;
The Bible at his Cotter's hearth
Had made my own more holy.

25 And if at times an evil strain,
To lawless love appealing,
Broke in upon the sweet refrain
Of pure and healthful feeling,

30 It died upon the eye and ear,
No inward answer gaining;
No heart had I to see or hear
The discord and the staining.

35 Let those who never erred forget
His worth, in vain bewailings;
Sweet Soul of Song! I own my debt
Uncancelled by his failings!

40 Lament who will the ribald line
Which tells his lapse from duty,
How kissed the maddening lips of wine
Or wanton ones of beauty;

45 But think, while falls that shade between
The erring one and Heaven,
That he who loved like Magdalen,
Like her may be forgiven.

50 Not his the song whose thunderous chime
Eternal echoes render;
The mournful Tuscan's¹ haunted rhyme,
And Milton's starry splendor!

¹ Dante.

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But who his human heart has laid
 To Nature's bosom nearer?
 Who sweetened toil like him, or paid
 To love a tribute dearer?

Through all his tuneful art, how strong
 The human feeling gushes!
 The very moonlight of his song
 Is warm with smiles and blushes!

Give lettered pomp to teeth of Time,
 So "Bonnie Doon" but tarry;
 Blot out the Epic's stately rhyme,
 But spare his Highland Mary!

MAUD MULLER

(1854)

"The poem," writes the poet, "had no real foundation in fact, though a hint of it may have been found in recalling an incident, trivial in itself, of a journey on the picturesque Maine seaboard with my sister some years before it was written. We had stopped to rest our tired horse under the shade of an apple-tree, and refresh him with water from a little brook which rippled through the stone wall across the road. A very beautiful young girl in scantest summer attire was at work in the hay-field, and as we talked with her we noticed that she strove to hide her bare feet by raking hay over them, blushing as she did so, through the tan of her cheek and neck." A much better poem, Wordsworth's "To a Highland Girl," was occasioned by somewhat similar circumstances. See Bret Harte's clever parody of Whittier's poem, "Mrs. Judge Jenkins," on p. 124 in Volume II.

Maud Muller on a summer's day
 Raked the meadow sweet with hay.

Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth
 Of simple beauty and rustic health.

Singing, she wrought, and her merry glee
 The mock-bird echoed from his tree.

But when she glanced to the far-off town,
 White from its hill-slope looking down,

The sweet song died, and a vague unrest
 And a nameless longing filled her breast,—

A wish that she hardly dared to own,
 For something better than she had known.

The Judge rode slowly down the lane,
 5 Smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.

He drew his bridle in the shade
 Of the apple-trees, to greet the maid,

10 And asked a draught from the spring that flowed
 Through the meadow across the road.

She stooped where the cool spring bubbled up,
 And filled for him her small tin cup,

15 And blushed as she gave it, looking down
 On her feet so bare, and her tattered gown.

"Thanks!" said the Judge; "a sweeter draught
 20 From a fairer hand was never quaffed."

He spoke of the grass and flowers and trees,
 Of the singing birds and the humming bees;

25 Then talked of the haying, and wondered
 whether
 The cloud in the west would bring foul weather.

And Maud forgot her brier-torn gown,
 30 And her graceful ankles bare and brown;

And listened, while a pleased surprise
 Looked from her long-lashed hazel eyes.

35 At last, like one who for delay
 Seeks a vain excuse, he rode away.

Maud Muller looked and sighed: "Ah me!
 40 That I the Judge's bride might be!

"He would dress me up in silks so fine,
 And praise and toast me at his wine.

"My father should wear a broadcloth coat;
 45 My brother should sail a painted boat.

"I'd dress my mother so grand and gay,
 And the baby should have a new toy each day.

50 "And I'd feed the hungry and clothe the poor,
 And all should bless me who left our door."

AMERICAN RENAISSANCE-----1830-1870

The Judge looked back as he climbed the hill,
And saw Maud Muller standing still.

"A form more fair, a face more sweet,
Ne'er hath it been my lot to meet.

"And her modest answer and graceful air
Show her wise and good as she is fair.

"Would she were mine, and I to-day,
Like her, a harvester of hay;

"No doubtful balance of rights and wrongs,
Nor weary lawyers with endless tongues,

"But low of cattle and song of birds,
And health and quiet and loving words."

But he thought of his sisters, proud and cold,
And his mother, vain of her rank and gold.

So, closing his heart, the Judge rode on,
And Maud was left in the field alone.

But the lawyers smiled that afternoon,
When he hummed in court an old love-tune;

And the young girl mused beside the well
Till the rain on the unraked clover fell.

He wedded a wife of richest dower,
Who lived for fashion, as he for power.

Yet oft, in his marble hearth's bright glow,
He watched a picture come and go;

And sweet Maud Muller's hazel eyes
Looked out in their innocent surprise.

Oft, when the wine in his glass was red,
He longed for the wayside well instead;

And closed his eyes on his garnished rooms
To dream of meadows and clover-blooms.

And the proud man sighed, with a secret pain,
"Ah, that I were free again!

"Free as when I rode that day,
Where the barefoot maiden raked her hay."

She wedded a man unlearned and poor,
And many children played round her door.

But care and sorrow, and childbirth pain,
5 Left their traces on heart and brain.

And oft, when the summer sun shone hot
On the new-mown hay in the meadow lot,

10 And she heard the little spring brook fall
Over the roadside, through the wall,

In the shade of the apple-tree again
She saw a rider draw his rein;

15 And, gazing down with timid grace,
She felt his pleased eyes read her face.

Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls
20 Stretched away into stately halls;

The weary wheel to a spinnet turned,
The tallow candle an astral burned,

25 And for him who sat by the chimney lug,¹
Dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug,

A manly form at her side she saw,
And joy was duty and love was law.

30 Then she took up her burden of life again,
Saying only, "It might have been."

Alas for maiden, alas for Judge,
35 For rich repiner and household drudge!

God pity them both! and pity us all,
Who vainly the dreams of youth recall.

40 For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these: "It might have been!"

Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies
Deeply buried from human eyes;

45 And, in the hereafter, angels may
Roll the stone from its grave away!

¹ "The term 'chimney lug' which occurs in this poem," Whittier explains, "refers to the old custom in New England of hanging a pole with hooks attached to it down the chimney, to hang pots and kettles on. It is called a 'lug-pole.'"

FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS' SAKE

INSCRIBED TO FRIENDS UNDER ARREST FOR
TREASON AGAINST THE SLAVE POWER

(1855)

The age is dull and mean. Men creep,
Not walk; with blood too pale and tame
To pay the debt they owe to shame;
Buy cheap, sell dear; eat, drink, and sleep
Down-pillowed, deaf to moaning want;
Pay tithes for soul-insurance; keep
Six days to Mammon, one to Cant.

In such a time, give thanks to God,
That somewhat of the holy rage
With which the prophets in their age
On all its decent seemings trod,
Has set your feet upon the lie,
That man and ox and soul and clod
Are market stock to sell and buy!

The hot words from your lips, my own,
To caution trained, might not repeat;
But, if some tares among the wheat
Of generous thought and deed were sown,
No common wrong provoked your zeal;
The silken gauntlet that is thrown
In such a quarrel rings like steel.

The brave old strife the fathers saw
For Freedom calls for men again
Like those who battled not in vain
For England's Charter, Alfred's law;
And right of speech and trial just
Wage in your name their ancient war
With venal courts and perjured trust.

God's ways seem dark, but, soon or late,
They touch the shining hills of day;
The evil cannot brook delay,
The good can well afford to wait.
Give ermined knaves their hour of crime;
Ye have the future grand and great,
The safe appeal of Truth to Time!

SKIPPER IRESON'S RIDE

(1828, 1857; 1857)

The founding of the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1857 gave Whittier for the first time a proper medium for publishing his better poems. Soon after the first

number, containing Whittier's "The Gift of Trite-mius," appeared, Whittier wrote Lowell:

"The first number is excellent. I send for December (I hope in season) a bit of a Yankee ballad, the spirit of which pleases me more than the execution Will it do? . . . The incident occurred sometime in the last century [It actually took place in 1808.] The refrain is the actual song of the women on this march To relish it, one must understand the peculiar tone and dialect of the ancient Marbleheaders."

Lowell, who in 1860 referred to the poem as "by long odds the best of modern ballads," suggested putting the refrain in dialect.

To Samuel Roads, Jr., the historian of Marblehead, who had tried to show that Ireson was not responsible for the abandonment of the disabled ship, Whittier wrote:

"My verse was founded solely on a fragment of rhyme which I heard from one of my early schoolmates, a native of Marblehead. . . . I knew nothing of the participators, and the narrative of the ballad was pure fancy. I am glad for the sake of truth and justice that the real facts are given in thy book. I certainly would not knowingly do injustice to any one, dead or living."

Of all the rides since the birth of time,
Told in story or sung in rhyme,—
On Apuleius's Golden Ass,
Or one-eyed Calendar's horse of brass,
Witch astride of a human back,
Islam's prophet on Al-Borák,—
The strangest ride that ever was sped
Was Ireson's, out from Marblehead!
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Body of turkey, head of owl,
Wings a-droop like a rained-on fowl,
Feathered and ruffled in every part,
Skipper Ireson stood in the cart.
Scores of women, old and young,
Strong of muscle, and glib of tongue,
Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,
Shouting and singing the shrill refrain:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,
Girls in bloom of cheek and lips,
Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase

Bacchus round some antique vase,
Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,
Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,
With conch-shells blowing and fish-horns'
twang,

Over and over the Mænads sang
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Small pity for him!—He sailed away
From a leaking ship in Chaleur Bay,—
Sailed away from a sinking wreck,
With his own town's-people on her deck!
"Lay by! lay by!" they called to him.
Back he answered, "Sink or swim!
Brag of your catch of fish again!"
And off he sailed through the fog and rain!
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Fathoms deep in dark Chaleur
That wreck shall lie forevermore.
Mother and sister, wife and maid,
Looked from the rocks of Marblehead
Over the moaning and rainy sea,—
Looked for the coming that might not be!
What did the winds and the sea-birds say
Of the cruel captain who sailed away?—
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Through the street, on either side,
Up flew windows, doors swung wide;
Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives gray,
Treble lent the fish-horn's bray.
Sea-worn grandsires, cripple-bound,
Hulks of old sailors run aground,
Shook head, and fist, and hat, and cane,
And cracked with curses the hoarse refrain:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Sweetly along the Salem road
Bloom of orchard and lilac showed.
Little the wicked skipper knew
Of the fields so green and the sky so blue.
Riding there in his sorry trim,

Like an Indian idol glum and grim,
Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear
Ol voices shouting, far and near:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
5 Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

"Hear me, neighbors!" at last he cried,—
"What to me is this noisy ride?
10 What is the shame that clothes the skin
To the nameless horror that lives within?
Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck,
And hear a cry from a reeling deck!
Hate me and curse me,—I only dread
15 The hand of God and the face of the dead!"
Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!
20 Then the wife of the skipper lost at sea
Said, "God has touched him! why should we!"
Said an old wife mourning her only son,
"Cut the rogue's tether and let him run!"
So with soft relentings and rude excuse,
25 Half scorn, half pity, they cut him loose,
And give him a cloak to hide him in,
And left him alone with his shame and sin
Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
30 By the women of Marblehead!

TELLING THE BEES

(1858)

"In 'Telling the Bees,' " wrote Lowell, "Mr. Whittier has enshrined a country superstition in a poem of exquisite grace and feeling." And, he might have added, Whittier has not sentimentalized the story.
40 Early nineteenth-century American authors who complained of the dearth of native folk-lore often did not know where to look for it outside of books. The country-bred Whittier naturally knew the superstitions of rural New England, as Longfellow, for example, did not. He explains the particular bit of folk-lore used in the poem (found also in Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*) as follows:

"On the death of a member of the family, the bees
50 were at once informed of the event, and their hives dressed in mourning. This ceremonial was supposed

1807-1892-----JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

to be necessary to prevent the swarms from leaving
their hives and seeking a new home "

In the poem Whittier has described the surroundings
of his birthplace See also his prose sketch, "The
Fish I Didn't Catch."

Here is the place, right over the hill
Runs the path I took;
You can see the gap in the old wall still,
And the stepping-stones in the shallow brook.

There is the house, with the gate red-barred,
And the poplars tall;
And the barn's brown length, and the cattle-
yard,
And the white horns tossing above the wall.

There are the beehives ranged in the sun;
And down by the brink
Of the brook are her poor flowers, weed-o'errun,
Pansy and daffodil, rose and pink.

A year has gone, as the tortoise goes,
Heavy and slow;
And the same rose blows, and the same sun
glows,
And the same brook sings of a year ago.

There's the same sweet clover-smell in the
breeze;
And the June sun warm
Tangles his wings of fire in the trees,
Setting, as then, over Fernside farm.

I mind me how with a lover's care
From my Sunday coat
I brushed off the burrs, and smoothed my hair,
And cooled at the brookside my brow and
throat.

Since we parted, a month had passed,—
To love, a year;
Down through the beeches I looked at last
On the little red gate and well-sweep near.

I can see it all now,—the slantwise rain
Of light through the leaves,
The sundown's blaze on her window-pane,
The bloom of her roses under the eaves.

Just the same as a month before,—
The house and the trees,

The barn's brown gable, the vine by the door,—
Nothing changed but the hives of bees.

Before them, under the garden wall,
5 Forward and back,
Went drearily singing the chore-girl small,
Draping each hive with a shred of black.

Trembling, I listened: the summer sun
10 Had the chill of snow;
For I knew she was telling the bees of one
Gone on the journey we all must go!

Then I said to myself, "My Mary weeps
15 For the dead to-day—
Haply her blind old grandsire sleeps
The fret and the pain of his age away "

But her dog whined low; on the doorway sill,
20 With his cane to his chin,
The old man sat; and the chore-girl still
Sung to the bees stealing out and in.

And the song she was singing ever since
25 In my ear sounds on:—
"Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence!
Mistress Mary is dead and gone!"

CENTENNIAL HYMN

(1876; 1876)

"Written for the opening of the International
35 Exhibition, Philadelphia, May 10, 1876. The music
for the hymn was written by John K. Paine, and
may be found in *The Atlantic Monthly* for June,
1876" (Whittier's note) For the same exposition
Bayard Taylor wrote the ode and Sidney Lanier the
cantata An Austrian scholar, Leon Kellner, throws
40 out an interesting suggestion: "Whittier's *Centennial
Hymn* with its resounding organ-tone—may have
floated before Kipling's mind when . . . he com-
posed his famous *Recessional*."

I

Our fathers' God! from out whose hand
The centuries fall like grains of sand,
We meet to-day, united, free,
And loyal to our land and Thee,
50 To thank Thee for the era done,
And trust Thee for the opening one.

II

Here, where of old, by Thy design,
The fathers spake that word of Thine
Whose echo is the glad refrain
Of rended bolt and falling chain,
To grace our festal time, from all
The zones of earth our guests we call.

III

Be with us while the New World greets
The Old World thronging all its streets,
Unveiling all the triumphs won
By art or toil beneath the sun;
And unto common good ordain
This rivalry of hand and brain.

IV

Thou, who hast here in concord furled
The war flags of a gathered world,
Beneath our Western skies fulfil
The Orient's mission of good-will,
And freighted with love's Golden Fleece,
Send back its Argonauts of peace.

V

For art and labor met in truce,
For beauty made the bride of use,
We thank Thee; but, withal, we crave
The austere virtues strong to save,

The honor proof to place or gold,
The manhood never bought nor sold!

VI

5 Oh make Thou us, through centuries long,
In peace secure, in justice strong;
Around our gift of freedom draw
The safeguards of Thy righteous law
And, cast in some diviner mould,
10 Let the new cycle shame the old!

THE WORD

(1881)

15 Voice of the Holy Spirit, making known
Man to himself, a witness swift and sure,
Warning, approving, true and wise and pure,
Counsel and guidance that misleadeth none!
20 By thee the mystery of life is read;
The picture-writing of the world's gray seers,
The myths and parables of the primal years,
Whose letter kills, by thee interpreted
Take healthful meanings fitted to our needs,
25 And in the soul's vernacular express
The common law of simple righteousness.
Hatred of cant and doubt of human creeds
May well be felt: the unpardonable sin
Is to deny the Word of God within!

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

1819 - 1891

I believe neither in heroes nor in saints; but I believe in great and good men, for I have known them, and among such men Lowell was of the richest nature I have known

—WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS, *Literary Friends and Acquaintance* (1900), p. 250.

He was a distinguished representative of Brahmin culture, but whether he was a representative of the solid realities of America is not so certain.

—V. L. PARRINGTON, *The Romantic Revolution in America* (1927), p. 472.

Lowell's family was—and still is—among the most distinguished in New England. His ancestors were college graduates prominent in the law and the ministry. The city of Lowell, Mass., was named for one uncle, and the Lowell Institute in Boston was founded by another. His father, the Rev. Charles Lowell, was for forty years minister of the West Church (Unitarian) in Boston. Lowell was born at "Elmwood," in Cambridge, the house which he always called home, on February 22, 1819. (Glimpses of Lowell's boyhood and youth are given in the books of two of his younger friends. Thomas Wentworth Higginson's *Old Cambridge* and Edward Everett Hale's *James Russell Lowell and His Friends*.) He entered Harvard College in 1834, where he studied under George Ticknor and Longfellow. Lowell was to become in 1855 the last occupant of the Smith Professorship of Modern Languages held by these two distinguished teachers. In college Lowell read a great deal, chiefly outside of his class work. The future editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* edited a college magazine, *Harvardiana*. In his senior year he was suspended "on account of continued neglect of his college duties." While in rustication at Concord, he saw something of Emerson, who did not then attract him. In his class poem—which he was not permitted to read at commencement—the future reformer showed his conservative sympathies by ridiculing both Transcendentalists and Abolitionists.

After his graduation in 1838, he studied law, like Holmes, because there seemed nothing else to do. After graduating from the Harvard Law School in 1840, he opened a law office in Boston; but, having no clients, he spent his time in reading and writing. In 1842 he founded an ill-fated magazine, *The Pioneer*, which—though among its contributors it numbered Poe, Hawthorne, Whittier, and Lowell himself—expired after three numbers, leaving Lowell in debt. In 1844 came his first important venture in literary criticism, *Conversations on Some of the Old Poets*, but until after the Civil War his more important work was to be done in verse.

In December, 1844, Lowell married Miss Maria White, a poet and a reformer. His active

interest in reform during the next decade was partly inspired by her. For a time he edited the *Pennsylvania Freeman* in Philadelphia at a salary of ten dollars a month; and he was long a contributor to the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*. In 1850, however, he was writing to C. F. Briggs: "I find that Reform cannot take up the whole of me." He was writing and publishing too rapidly. Late in 1847 appeared his *Poems, Second Series* (dated 1848), and in the following year came *The Vision of Sir Launfal, A Fable for Critics*, and the first series of *The Biglow Papers*. Mrs. Lowell died in 1853. In 1857 he married Miss Frances Dunlap. In 1854 he gave at the Lowell Institute a series of lectures on the nineteenth-century poets and, partly as a result, was appointed the next year to succeed Longfellow as Smith Professor of Modern Languages, with the privilege of spending a year in Europe for fuller preparation. He taught at Harvard most of the time until 1877. He was later of the opinion that he would have accomplished more if he had never been a teacher. He wrote to Charles Eliot Norton on February 2, 1874:

" . . . I never was good for much as a professor—once a week, perhaps, at the best, when I could manage to get into some conceit of myself, and so could put a little of my *go* into the boys. The rest of the time my desk was as good as I. And then, on the other hand, my being a professor wasn't good for me—it damped my gunpowder, as it were, and my mind, when it took fire at all (which wasn't often), drawled off in an unwilling fuse instead of leaping to meet the first spark."

In an admirable essay, "Mr. Lowell as a Teacher" (in *Stelligeri*), the late Professor Barrett Wendell described Lowell's methods of instruction, which were as unconventional as those of Longfellow: "We gave up note-books in a week. Our business was not to cram lifeless detail, but to absorb as much as we might of the spirit of his exuberant literary vitality." Best remembered by Lowell's students were the evenings spent in his library before a wood-fire while Lowell smoked his pipe and talked "in his own quizzical way—at one moment beautifully in earnest, at the next so whimsical that you could not quite make out what he meant—about whatever came into his head." "He believed," wrote the late C. W. Eliot, "that language should always be taught primarily as the vehicle of beautiful literature, whereas most language teachers of that day were using admirable literature as [a] means of teaching grammar and philology." (The graduate student should by all means read the address which Lowell delivered while President of the Modern Language Association. See *PMLA*, V, 5-22 (1890). The address was reprinted in *Latest Literary Essays* under the title, "The Study of Modern Languages.")

In 1857, chiefly through the persistence of Francis H. Underwood, the *Atlantic Monthly* came into existence and the New England group for the first time had an adequate organ. As its first editor (1857-1861), Lowell set a high standard for his successors. He, along with Poe and Richard Watson Gilder, is one of our great magazine editors. The position gave Lowell great influence, and he sometimes used it to alter the manuscripts of important contributors as an editor of the present day would perhaps not dare to do. For example, Lowell, while editing the *North American Review*, wrote to E. C. Stedman:

"I shall take the liberty to make a verbal change here and there, such as I am sure you would agree to could we talk the matter over. I think, for example, you speak rather too well of young Lytton, whom I regard both as an imposter and as an antinomian heretic. Swinburne I must modify a little, as you will see, to make the [*North American*] *Review* consistent with itself. But you need not be afraid of not knowing your own child."

Lowell was joint editor with Charles Eliot Norton of the *North American Review* in the years 1864-1872. The following passage in a letter from Lowell to John Lothrop Motley, July 28, 1864, shows the keen insight of the expert magazinist:

"You may have heard that Norton and I have undertaken to edit the *North American*—rather Sisyphean job, you will say. It wanted three chief elements to be successful. It wasn't thoroughly, that is, thick and thinly, loyal, it wasn't lively, and it had no particular opinions on any particular subject.

"It was an eminently safe periodical, and accordingly was in great danger of running aground. It was an easy matter, of course, to make it loyal—even to give it opinions (such as they were), but to make it alive is more difficult. Perhaps the day of the quarterlies is gone by, and those megatheria of letters may be in the mere course of nature withdrawing to their last swamps to die in peace. Anyhow, here we are with our megatherium on our hands, and we must strive to find what will fill his huge belly, and keep him alive a little longer."

The Civil War stirred Lowell as it did few others of his group. The deaths of three much loved nephews affected him deeply. He published a second series of *The Biglow Papers* in the *Atlantic Monthly*. For the *North American Review* he wrote several political articles—including one on Lincoln that pleased the President. "I *did* divine him earlier than most men of the Brahmin caste," he wrote in 1886. Perhaps the best expression of his patriotic feeling is found in his "Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration" in 1865, which also contains a notable tribute to Lincoln. After the war he came to the conclusion that the Congressional policy of Reconstruction was wrong. "He had," says Howells, "a great tenderness for the broken and ruined South . . ."

Lowell was the youngest of the great New Englanders, but even he found it difficult to adjust himself to the many changes brought about by the Civil War. He turned more and more to prose, and he became interested in various political and social problems. On May 2, 1879, he wrote to William Dean Howells:

". . . I feel every day more sensibly that I belong to a former age. A new generation has grown up that knows not Joseph, and I have nothing left to do but to rake together what embers are left of my fire and get what warmth out of them I may."

He was Minister to Spain (1877-1880) and later to England (1880-1885). In England he was extremely popular. He was on the whole the most distinguished representative the United States has sent to the Court of St. James's. In 1882 Moses Coit Tyler, the first scholarly historian of American literature, wrote in his journal an account of his meeting with Lowell:

"*London, 23 June.* . . . At about two, I called at the legation in Victoria street. After some delay I was ushered into Lowell's room. My first impression was of the gracefulness and graciousness of the man; his elegance in dress and form; his manly beauty. As he told me, he is sixty-three years old; his dark auburn hair still abundant and rich, just touched with silver and parted in the middle. His whiskers are more whitened. His eyes bright; his whole face mobile, aristocratic, refined. The perfect courtier and man of the world, dashed by scholarship, wit, genius, consciousness of reputation, and success. His voice was very pleasant and sweet; his tones indescribably pleasant, a pronunciation not copied from the English, and as pure and melodious as theirs at the best. His fluency in words

perfect, his diction neat, pointed, with merry implications and fine turns. He is an immense success in England, in society and public meetings; petted and flattered like a prince; admired by men and worshipped by women. He has the pick and run of the best society in the kingdom. His manners have the ease, poise, facility, and polish of one who has got used to courts and palaces. I must say I never saw a more perfect gentleman. Indeed, he is too perfect; it would have pleased me better to have found the poet, satirist, and man of letters less worldly, more simple in style. I revere the sturdy dignity and homely simplicity of men like Emerson and Whittier."

Tyler was disturbed when Lowell remarked: "My dear Mr. Tyler, in America it is men like you who have not the least influence. The country is ruled by low demagogues." As a matter of fact, Lowell was not far wrong. His doubts concerning the post-war political and social development of America he expressed with courage in several addresses, notably "The Place of the Independent in Politics." Note also the "Epistle to George William Curtis."

In 1885 Lowell returned to "Elmwood" and his books. He died there on August 12, 1891. If he had not fulfilled the promise of his earlier years, he had at least lived up to his own motto:

*"The Epic of a man rehearse,
Be something better than thy verse."*

The best edition of Lowell's poems is the Cambridge Edition (1897). There are two fairly inclusive editions of his prose works: the Riverside (1891-1892) and the Elmwood (1904). See also Albert Mordell (ed.), *The Function of the Poet and Other Essays* (1920). The standard life in two volumes is by H. E. Scudder (1905). There are shorter biographies by Ferris Greenslet (1905) and Richmond Croom Beatty (1942). Lowell's letters, which are excellent reading, were edited by Charles Eliot Norton. See also M. A. DeWolfe Howe, *New Letters of James Russell Lowell* (1932). In his *James Russell Lowell as a Critic* (1915), J. J. Reilly views him as an impressionist. Norman Foerster in *American Criticism* (1928) takes a radically different view. There is a bibliography by G. W. Cooke (1906). *James Russell Lowell: Representative Selections* (1947), edited by H. H. Clark and Norman Foerster, has an excellent introduction and a good working bibliography. See also Robert C. Le Clair, *Three American Travellers in England* (1945).

LETTERS*

The poems and essays upon which Lowell's once great reputation rested have, with few exceptions,

* The letters to his daughter Mabel and to John Ruskin are taken from M. A. DeWolfe Howe (ed.), *New Letters of James Russell Lowell* (1932); the others are from Charles Eliot Norton (ed.), *Letters of James Russell Lowell* (1893); reprinted by permission of Harper & Brothers, the publishers of both volumes.

gradually faded from remembrance. It may be that his letters will finally constitute his best claim to our attention. Certainly they are among the best in American literature. They are spontaneous, natural, full of gusto. Lowell's rich personality lives better in them than in anything else he wrote. He could have said in prose perhaps better what he wrote in "A Familiar Epistle to a Friend:"

*"For letters, so it seems to me,
Our careless quintessence should be,*

*Our real nature's truant play
When Consciousness looks t' other way;
Not drop by drop, with watchful skill,
Gathered in Art's deliberate still,
But life's insensible completeness
Got as the ripe grape gets its sweetness,
As if it had a way to fuse
The golden sunlight into juice."*

TO MISS GRACE NORTON

MADISON, WISCONSIN,
April 9, 1855.

. . . Though I have been in such dreadfully low spirits since I left home that I have not seen much to write about, yet I like to keep my promises, and as I have had one *very* pleasant adventure, I will try to make a letter of it. I will premise generally that I hate this business of lecturing. To be received at a bad inn by a solemn committee, in a room with a stove that smokes but not exhilarates, to have three cold fish-tails laid in your hand to shake, to be carried to a cold lecture-room, to read a cold lecture to a cold audience, to be carried back to your smoke-side, paid, and the three fish-tails again—well, it is not delightful exactly. On the whole, I was so desperate that, after a week of it, I wrote out hither to be let off—but they would not, and so here I am. I shall go home with six hundred dollars in my pocket, and one of those insects so common in Italy and Egypt in my ear. Sometimes, though, one has very pleasant times, and one gets *tremendous* puffs in the local papers. - - -

TO JOHN RUSKIN

This letter shows us the editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* trying—in vain in this instance—to secure an article from the well-known art critic, who was born in the same year as Lowell. Charles Eliot Norton, referred to in the second paragraph, was the brother of the Miss Norton to whom the previous letter was addressed. He was later Lowell's associate on the *North American Review*, Professor of Fine Arts at Harvard, and the editor of Lowell's letters.

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS,
22nd Novr., 1859.

MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—To have made one man happy in a life-time is worth living for, and you have made me happy and proud too in writing to Norton that you counted me

"among your friends." *That* you may take for granted, but I must go farther and say "among your debtors as well." My proportion of a debt which I share with all who speak or read the English tongue may be small as far as it concerns you, but to me it is great and lifelong. We all quarrel with you sometimes, but what good could we get from a man who prophesied smooth things? and I am sure that I am not assuming too much when I say that in giving you my hearty thanks for what you have done, I am only doing what all the men whose opinion you would care for in America would gladly do if they had the same pretext for it that I have. I offer you my hand with all my heart, and I pay you my fealty also as to the man who has done for Art what Wordsworth wished to do for Poetry.

Now what is the use of a friend unless he can ask us now and then to do him a kindness, and like us all the better if we say him nay? So I am going to ask a favor of you. I am editor of a Magazine which Norton may tell you about if he likes. As the old poet of Kalewala says, "it is not of the best, nor is it of the worst." I should be as happy as an Editor can be if you would write something for it upon any topic that interests you. I can promise you (reckoning à la Buckle) at least a hundred thousand readers—for its subscribers are nearly forty thousand—readers who will be glad to be taught. Not a bad congregation, and moreover we pay our preacher at the rate of ten dollars (2 guineas) a page of the size of Blackwood.

I do not ask this because I want your *name*, but because I want what you would write.

You need not answer this. A *yes* or *no* when you are writing to Norton will be enough, and whether or no,

I remain most faithfully

Your friend

J. R. LOWELL

i go in for the A buy
like all git eout

HOSEA BIGLOW

TO NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

William Dean Howells refers to this letter of introduction in his *Literary Friends and Acquaintance*: "I would almost have foregone meeting the weird genius only to have kept that letter, for it said certain

infinitely precious things of me with such a sweetness, such a grace as Lowell alone could give his praise. Years afterwards, when Hawthorne was dead, I met Mrs. Hawthorne, and told her of the pang I had in parting with it, and she sent it me, doubly enriched by Hawthorne's keeping "

CAMBRIDGE, Aug. 5, 1860.

MY DEAR HAWTHORNE,—I have 'no masonic claim upon you except community of tobacco, and the young man who brings this does not smoke.

But he wants to look at you, which will do you no harm, and him a great deal of good.

His name is Howells, and he is a fine young fellow, and has written several *poems* in the *Atlantic*, which of course you have never read, because you don't do such things yourself, and are old enough to know better.

When I think how much you might have profited by the perusal of certain verses of somebody who shall be nameless—but, no matter! If my judgment is good for anything, this youth has more in him than any of our younger fellows in the way of rhyme.

Of course he can't hope to rival the *Consule Planco*¹ men. Therefore let him look at you, and charge it

To yours always,

J. R. LOWELL.

TO HIS DAUGHTER

HOTEL DE LORRAINE,

7 RUE DE BEAUNE,

PARIS, 12th March, 1873.

MY DEAREST LITTLE MOTHER,—how I wish I could look in upon you for a moment and see the little prodigy you have produced! However, time is flying all the while and every day takes off one from those that are left of exile. Yet I like being over here very well in some respects too, only I suppose I am too old to be interested in many things that would have attracted me twenty years ago. To be sure I have learned Paris more thoroughly than most Frenchmen and I have limbered my tongue so much in French as almost to enjoy talking it. So I shall never regret my six months here, but at the same time I find nothing that takes the place of Elmwood to me. When I lie awake at night I fancy when and where we shall meet, and how we

shall have you and *the* Baby down for a visit. I begin to understand grand-paternity pretty well. I already feel proud of the boy I have never seen as if a certain part in the credit of him belonged to me. I begin to grow miserly by anticipation that I may leave him something handsome to remember me by in my will, and I don't know how many times I have bought a basketwagon at Whitney & Brackett's and perambulated him up and down the sunny side of Brattle Street, as I used to see old Mr. Vaughan doing with his grandson. *Old* Mr. V. indeed! He begins to seem younger to me already, and after all, his hair is not so *very* white. A man may be young enough and a grandfather too. By this time, I suppose, your little man has shown all the signs of extraordinary cleverness. It is mentioned as one of the miracles of St. Bernard that a cross baby grew quiet when he drew near, clasped its tiny fingers round one of his and tried to thrust it into his mouth. I dare say Frank has already done as much for Ned who, without taking himself for a saint, has no doubt seen a miracle of precocity in the action. I recall all my own adventures as a dry nurse with his mother, how she used to keep me trotting all night long in my dressing-gown with her in my arms, and how again I have toiled in a "pounding-chair" by the hour together making as much noise as an old-fashioned fire-engine. Don't let him go to the theatre yet awhile, for late hours are bad for them at his tender age, and if he *will* go to musters don't let him have too much money. Leave all the spoiling to his grandfathers. Mamma already forebodes his ruin at my hands—but I am resolved to be stern as Brutus. As soon as he has any kind of features I shall expect his photograph—if taken by his mother I shall value it the more, though I fear she would contrive to make even the sun flatter him just a little bit. He is a fortunate boy. *I* never had any grandfather, nor any grandmother to speak of, having only seen her once or twice nearly fifty years ago. But he has two of each kind not to speak of a greatgrandmother. Be sure and send me all kinds of anecdotes of him even the most trivial. Does he cry lustily? Does he drivel as a baby should? Does he crow? I suppose he hardly sits at table yet, but by the time we get back he will be able to walk very likely and I shall have to pay my court to him as if he were a young prince. I dare say he will be afraid of my white beard—

¹In the consulship of Plancus; in the good old days. The phrase is from Horace, *Odes*, XIV.28.

for it is whitening very fast—and I *know* he will pull it, his mother always did. (His grandmother, by an odd chance, has just come behind me and pulled my ears—she is reading Béranger on the sofa.) - - -

Goodbye, God Bless you! Love to Ned.

Your loving father

J. R. L.

TO JOEL BENTON

Two poems, "The World's Fair, 1876" and "Tempora Mutantur," which Lowell had published in the *Nation*, were denounced in the newspapers. Benton, who came to Lowell's defense in an article, "Mr. Lowell's Recent Political Verse," published in the *Christian Century* for December 15, 1875, says of the outburst which Lowell's poems had provoked: "It was charged that he was no true American; that he was, in fact, a snob, that he had elbowed against dukes and lords so much and so long that he could not any longer tolerate Democracy. And for many weeks this and other equally puerile nonsense went on unrebuked." The following lines from "The World's Fair, 1876" are representative (compare "An Epistle to George William Curtis"). Brother Jonathan, the speaker, recommends sarcastically putting on exhibition some of the new political methods of the "dreadful decade":

*"Show 'em your Civil Service, and explain
How all men's loss is everybody's gain;
Show your new patent to increase your rents
By paying quarters for collecting cents;
Show your short cut to cure financial ills
By making paper-collars current bills;
Show your new bleaching-process, cheap and brief,
To wit: a jury chosen by the thief;
Show your State legislatures; show your Rings;
And challenge Europe to produce such things
As high officials sitting half in sight
To share the plunder and to fix things right;
If that don't fetch her, why, you only need
To show your latest style in martyrs—Tweed:
She'll find it hard to hide her spiteful tears
At such advance in one poor hundred years."*

ELMWOOD, Jan. 19, 1876.

DEAR SIR,—I thank you for the manly way in which you put yourself at my side when I had fallen among thieves, still more for the pithy and well-considered words with which you confirm and maintain my side of the quarrel. At any time of life one is not apt to vex his soul at any criticism, but I confess that in this case I was more than annoyed, I was even saddened. For what was said was so childish and

showed such shallowness, such levity, and such dulness of apprehension both in politics and morals on the part of those who claim to direct public opinion (as, alas! they too often do) as to confirm me in my gravest apprehensions. I believe "The World's Fair" gave the greatest offence. They had not even the wit to see that I put my sarcasm into the mouth of Brother Jonathan, thereby implying and meaning to imply that the common-sense of my countrymen was awakening to the facts, and that *therefore* things were perhaps not so desperate as they seemed.

I had just come home from a two years' stay in Europe, so it was discovered that I had been corrupted by association with foreign aristocracies! I need not say to you that the society I frequented in Europe was what it is at home—that of my wife, my studies, and the best nature and art within my reach. But I confess that I was embittered by my experience. Wherever I went I was put on the defensive. Whatever extracts I saw from American papers told of some new fraud or defalcation, public or private. It was sixteen years since my last visit abroad, and I found a very striking change in the feeling towards America and Americans. An Englishman was everywhere treated with a certain deference: Americans were at best tolerated. The example of America was everywhere urged in France as an argument against republican forms of government. It was fruitless to say that the people were still sound when the Body Politic which draws its life from them showed such blotches and sores. I came home, and instead of wrath at such abominations, I found banter. I was profoundly shocked, for I had received my earlier impressions in a community the most virtuous, I believe, that ever existed. . . . On my return I found that community struggling half hopelessly to prevent General Butler from being put in its highest office against the will of all its best citizens. I found Boutwell, one of its senators, a chief obstacle to Civil-Service reform (our main hope). . . . I saw Banks returned by a larger majority than any other member of the lower house. . . . In the Commonwealth that built the first free school and the first college, I heard culture openly derided. I suppose I like to be liked as well as other men. Certainly I would rather be left to my studies than meddle with politics. But I had attained to some consideration, and

my duty was plain. I wrote what I did in the plainest way, that he who ran might read, and that I hit the mark I aimed at is proved by the attacks against which you so generously defend me. These fellows have no notion what love of country means. It is in my very blood and bones. If I am not an American, who ever was?

I am no pessimist, nor ever was, . . . but is not the Beecher horror disheartening? Is not Delano discouraging? and Babcock atop of him? . . . What fills me with doubt and dismay is the degradation of the moral tone. Is it or is it not a result of Democracy? Is ours a "government of the people by the people for the people," or a Kakistocracy rather, for the benefit of knaves at the cost of fools? Democracy is, after all, nothing more than an experiment like another, and I know only one way of judging it—by its results. Democracy in itself is no more sacred than monarchy. It is Man who is sacred; it is his duties and opportunities, not his rights, that nowadays need reinforcement. It is honor, justice, culture, that make liberty invaluable, else worse than worthless if it mean only freedom to be base and brutal. As things have been going lately, it would surprise no one if the officers who had Tweed in charge should demand a reward for their connivance in the evasion of that popular hero. I am old enough to remember many things, and what I remember I meditate upon. My opinions do not live from hand to mouth. And so long as I live I will be no writer of birthday odes to King Demos any more than I would be to King Log, nor shall I think *our* cant any more sacred than any other. Let us all work together (and the task will need us all) to make Democracy possible. It certainly is no invention to go of itself any more than the perpetual motion.

Forgive me for this long letter of justification, which I am willing to write for your friendly eye, though I should scorn to make any public defence. Let the tenor of my life and writings defend me.

Cordially yours,

J. R. LOWELL.

TO MISS GRACE NORTON

ELMWOOD, July 3, 1876.

. . . What can I tell you about Cincinnati? The journey impressed me, as a journey in

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America always does, with the wonderful richness and comfort of the country, and with the distinctive Americanism that is moulding into one type of feature and habits so many races that had widely diverged from the same original stock. Is the West to reproduce the primitive Aryan who wandered out of the East so long ago? One gets also an impression of size which enables one to sympathize with his countrymen (as I love to do) in the mere bigness of the country. These immense spaces, tremulous with the young grain, trophies of individual, or at any rate of unorganized courage and energy, of the people and not of dynasties, were to me inexpressibly impressive and even touching. The whole landscape had a neighborly air, such as I feel in no other country. The men who have done and are doing these things know how things *should be* done, and will find some way, I am sure, of bringing the country back to business principles. It was very interesting, also, to meet men from Kansas and Nevada and California, to see how manly and intelligent they were, and especially what large heads they had. They had not the manners of Vere de Vere, perhaps, but they had an independence and self-respect which are the prime element of fine bearing. I think I never (not even in Germany) sat at meat with so many men who used their knives as shovels, nor with so many who were so quiet and self-restrained in their demeanor. The Westerners, especially, may be Grangers, or what you will (it won't be the first case in history where self-interest has blinded men to the rights of others—nor the last), but you feel that they have the unmistakable makings of *men* in them. They were less sensitive to the offences of Blaine than I could have wished, but I suspect that few of our Boston men who have had to do with Western railways have been more scrupulous. I rather think they set the example of tempting legislators with the hope of questionable gains. - - -

from THE BIGLOW PAPERS, FIRST SERIES* (1848)

These poems, first published in the *Boston Courier* and the *Anti-Slavery Standard*, were occasioned by

* The selections from Lowell which follow are reprinted by permission of, and by arrangement with, the Houghton Mifflin Company.

the War with Mexico On September 13, 1859, Lowell wrote to Thomas Hughes (the English author of *Tom Brown's School Days*), who was planning to bring out an edition in England:

"I only know that I believed our war with Mexico (though we had as just ground for it as a strong nation ever has against a weak one) to be essentially a war of false pretences, and that it would result in widening the boundaries and so prolonging the life of slavery . . . I was born and bred in the country, and the dialect was homely to me. I tried my first 'Biglow Paper' in a newspaper, and found it had a great run. So I wrote the otheis from time to time during the year that followed, always very rapidly, sometimes (as with 'What Mr. Robinson Thinks') at one sitting.

"When I came to collect them and publish them in a volume, I conceived my parson-editor with his pedantry and verbosity, his amiable vanity and superiority to the verses he was editing, as a fitting artistic background and foil. It gave me the chance, too, of glancing obliquely at many things which were beyond the horizon of my other characters. . . . I confess that I am proud of the recognition the book has received in England, because it seems to prove that, despite its intense provincialism, there is a general truth to human nature in it which justifies its having been written."

The Biglow Papers is the only piece of dialect writing before the Civil War that is generally remembered, but the Yankee dialect had been already widely used on the stage and in the newspapers. (For the literary use of American dialects, which do not differ greatly, see G. P. Krapp, *The English Language in America*, 1925.) "I know Yankee, if I know nothing else," wrote Lowell. The book had some influence upon Edward Eggleston and perhaps other local colorists after the Civil War.

Mrs. James T. Fields quotes Emerson as saying: "I told Lowell once that his humorous poems gave me great pleasure; they were worth all his serious poetry. He did not take it very well, but muttered, 'The Washers of the Shroud,' and walked away." V. L. Parrington's estimate of *The Biglow Papers* is suggestive:

"The native clutter of Lowell's mind is there laid bare—the grotesque mixture of homely satire, moral aphorisms, Yankee linguistics, literary criticism—an unwieldy mass that he could neither simplify nor reduce to order. The machinery spoils the propaganda and weighs down the satire; yet the verse has survived because for once Lowell let himself go and hit such heads as he had a mind to."

NO. I. A LETTER

FROM MR. EZEKIEL BIGLOW OF JAALAM TO THE
HON. JOSEPH T. BUCKINGHAM, EDITOR OF THE
BOSTON COURIER, INCLOSING A POEM OF HIS
SON, MR. HOSEA BIGLOW

(1846)

JAYLEM, june 1846.

MR. EDDYTER,—Our Hosea wuz down to Boston last week, and he see a cruetin Sarjunt a struttin round as popler as a hen with 1 chicking, with 2 fellers a drummin and fifin arter him like all nater. the sarjunt he thout Hosea hedn't gut his 1 teeth cut cos he looked a kindo's though he'd jest com down, so he cal'lated to hook hum in, but Hosy woodn't take none o' his sarse for all he hed much as 20 Rooster's tales stuck onto his hat and eenamost enuf brass a bobbin up and down on his shoulders and figured onto his coat and trousis, let alone wut nater hed sot in his featers, to make a 6 pounder out on.

wal, Hosea he com home considerabal riled, and arter I'd gone to bed I heern Him a thrashin round like a short-tailed Bull in flit-time. The old Woman ses she to me ses she, Zckle, ses she, our Hosee's gut the chollery or suthin anuther ses she, don't you Bee skeered, ses I, he's oney amakin pottery ses i, he's ollers on hand at that ere busyness like Da & martin,¹ and shure enuf, cum mornin, Hosy he cum down stares full chizzle, hare on eend and cote tales flyin, and sot rite of to go reed his varses to Parson Wilbur bein he haint aney grate shows o' book larnin himself, bimeby he cum back and sed the parson wuz dreffle tickled with 'em as i hoop you will Be, and said they wuz True grit. Hosea ses taint hardly fair to call 'em hisn now, cos the parson kind o' slicked off sum o' the last varses, but he told Hosee he didn't want to put his ore in to tetch to the Rest on 'em, bein they wuz verry well As thay wuz, and then Hosy ses he sed suthin a nuther about Simplex Mundishes² or sum sech feller, but I guess Hosea kind o' didn't hear him, for I never hearn o' nobody o' that name in this villadge, and I've lived here man and boy 76 year cum next tater diggin, and thair aint no wheres a kitting spryer'n I be.

¹ Day and Martin were makers of shoe polish.

² *Simplex munditiis*, simply adorned.

If you print 'em I wish you'd jest let folks
know who hosy's father is, cos my ant Keziah
used to say it's nater to be curus ses she, she
ain't livin' though and he's a likely kind o'
lad.

EZEKIEL BIGLOW

Thrash away, you'll *hev* to rattle
On them kittle-drums o' yourn,—
'Taint a knowin' kind o' cattle
Thet is ketched with mouldy corn;
Put in stiff, you fifer feller,
Let folks see how spry you be,—
Guess you'll toot till you are yellor
'Fore you git ahold o' mel

Thet air flag's a leetle rotten,
Hope it ain't your Sunday's best;—
Fact! it takes a sight o' cotton
To stuff out a soger's chest:
Sence we farmers hev to pay fer't,
Ef you must wear humps like these,
S'posin' you should try salt hay fer't,
It would du ez slick ez grease.

'Twouldn't suit them Southun fellers,
They're a drefle graspin' set,
We must ollers blow the bellers
Wen they want their irons het;
May be it's all right ez preachin',
But my narves it kind o' grates,
Wen I see the overreachin'
O' them nigger-drivin' States.

Them thet rule us, them slave-traders,
Haint they cut a thunderin' swarth
(Helped by Yankee renegaders),
Thru the vartu o' the North!
We begin to think it's nater
To take sarse an' not be riled;—
Who'd expect to see a tater
All on eend at bein' biled?

Ez fer war, I call it murder,—
There you hev it plain an' flat;
I don't want to go no funder
Than my Testymet fer that;
God hez sed so plump an' fairly,
It's ez long ez it is broad,
An' you've gut to git up airly
Ef you want to take in God.

'Taint your eppyletts an' feathers
Make the thing a grain more right;

5 'Taint afollerin' your bell-wethers
Will excuse ye in His sight.
Ef you take a sword an' dror it,
An' go stick a feller thru,
Guv'ment aint to answer for it,
God'll send the bill to you.

10 Wut's the use o' meetin'-goin'
Every Sabbath, wet or dry,
Ef it's right to go amowin'
Feller-men like oats an' rye?
I dunno but wut it's pooty
Trainin' round in bobtail coats,—
But it's curus Christian dooty
15 This 'ere cuttin' folks's throats.

They may talk o' Freedom's airy
Tell they're pupple in the face,—
It's a grand gret cemetary
20 Fer the barthrights of our race;
They jest want this Californy
So's to lug new slave-States in
To abuse ye, an' to scorn ye,
An' to plunder ye like sin.

25 Aint it cute to see a Yankee
Take sech everlastin' pains,
All to get the Devil's thankee
Helpin' on 'em weld their chains?
30 Wy, it's jest ez clear ez figgers,
Clear ez one an' one make two,
Chaps thet make black slaves o' niggers
Want to make wite slaves o' you.

35 Tell ye jest the eend I've come to
Arter cipherin' plaguy smart,
An' it makes a handy sum, tu,
Any gump could larn by heart;
Laborin' man an' laborin' woman
40 Hev one glory an' one shame.
Ev'y thin' thet's done inhuman
Injers all on 'em the same.

'Taint by turnin' out to hack folks
45 You're agoin' to git your right,
Nor by lookin' down on black folks
Coz you're put upon by wite;
Slavery aint o' nary color,
'Taint the hide thet makes it wus,
50 All it keers fer in a feller
'S jest to make him fill its pus.

Want to tackle *me* in, du ye?
I expect you'll hev to wait;

Wen cold lead puts daylight thru ye
 You'll begin to kal'late;
 S'pose the crows wun't fall to pickin'
 All the carkiss from your bones,
 Coz you helped to give a lickin'
 To them poor half-Spanish drones?

Jest go home an' ask our Nancy
 Wether I'd be sech a goose
 Ez to jine ye,—guess you'd fancy
 The etarnal bung wuz loose!
 She wants me fer home consumption,
 Let alone the hay's to mow,—
 Ef you're arter folks o' gumption,
 You've a darned long row to hoe.

Take them editors that's crowin'
 Like a cockerel three months old,—
 Don't ketch any on 'em goin',
 Though they *be* so blasted bold;
Aint they a prime lot o' fellers?
 'Fore they think on't guess they'll sprout
 (Like a peach thet's got the yellors),
 With the meanness bustin' out.

Wal, go 'long to help 'em stealin'
 Bigger pens to cram with slaves,
 Help the men thet's ollers dealin'
 Insults on your father's graves,
 Help the strong to grind the feeble,
 Help the many agin the few,
 Help the men thet call your people
 Witewashed slaves an' peddlin' crew!

Massachusetts, God forgive her,
 She's akneelin' with the rest,
 She, thet ough' to ha' clung ferever
 In her grand old eagle-nest;
 She thet ough' to stand so fearless
 W'ile the wracks are round her hurled,
 Holdin' up a beacon peerless
 To the oppressed of all the world!

Ha'n't they sold your colored seamen
 Ha'n't they made your env'ys w'iz?
 Wut'll make ye act like freemen?
 Wut'll git your dander riz?
 Come, I'll tell ye wut I'm thinkin'
 Is our dooty in this fix,
 They'd ha' done't ez quick ez winkin'
 In the days o' seventy-six.

Clang the bells in every steeple,
 Call all true men to disown

The tradoozers of our people,
 The enslavers o' their own;
 Let our dear old Bay State proudly
 Put the trumpet to her mouth,
 5 Let her ring this messidge loudly
 In the ears of all the South:—

"I'll return ye good fer evil
 Much ez we frail mortuls can,
 10 But I wun't go help the Devil
 Makin' man the cus o' man;
 Call me coward, call me traider,
 Jest ez suits your mean idees,—
 Here I stand a tyrant-hater
 15 An' the friend o' God an' Peacel"

Ef I'd *my* way I hed ruther
 We should go to work an' part,
 They take one way, we take t'other,
 20 Guess it wouldn't break my heart;
 Man hed ough' to put asunder
 Them thet God has noways jined;
 An' I shouldn't gretly wonder
 Ef there's thousands o' my mind.³
 25

[The first recruiting sergeant on record I conceive to have been that individual who is mentioned in the Book of Job as *going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it*. Bishop Latimer will have him to have been a bishop, but to me that other calling would appear more congenial. The sect of Cainites is not yet extinct, who esteemed the first-born of
 30 Adam to be the most worthy, not only because of that privilege of primogeniture, but inasmuch as he was able to overcome and slay his younger brother. That was a wise saying of the famous Marquis Pescara to the Papal Legate, that *it was impossible for men to serve Mars and Christ at the same time*. Yet in time past the profession of arms was judged to be κατ' ἐξοχήν⁴ that of a gentleman, nor does this opinion want for strenuous upholders
 35 even in our day. Must we suppose, then, that the profession of Christianity was only intended for losels, or, at best, to afford an opening for plebeian ambition? Or shall we hold with that

³ Some Abolitionists advocated breaking up the Union; Lowell apparently did not mean literally what he says in the closing stanza. In a letter to Charles F. Briggs, March 26, 1848, he says: "I do not agree with the abolitionists in their disunion and non-voting theories."

⁴ Preeminently.

nicely metaphysical Pomeranian, Captain Vratz, who was Count Konigsmark's chief instrument in the murder of Mr. Thynne, that the Scheme of Salvation has been arranged with an especial eye to the necessities of the upper classes, and that "God would consider a *gentleman* and deal with him suitably to the condition and profession he had placed him in"? It may be said of us all, *Exemplo plus quam ratione vivimus*.⁵ —H. W.]

NO. III. WHAT MR. ROBINSON THINKS

(1847)

George Nixon Briggs, the Whig Governor of Massachusetts, was renominated in 1847. His unsuccessful opponent on the Democratic ticket was Caleb Cushing, who was at that time with the American army in Mexico. John Paul Robinson, a member of the state legislature and a Whig, had made public an open letter announcing his intention of voting for Cushing.

Guvener B. is a sensible man;

He stays to his home an' looks arter his folks;

He draws his furrer ez straight ez he can,

An' into nobody's tater-patch pokes;

But John P.

Robinson he

Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

My! aint it terrible? Wut shall we du?

We can't never choose him o' course,—thet's flat;

Guess we shall hev to come round (don't you?)

An' go in fer thunder an' guns, an' all that;

Fer John P.

Robinson he

Sez he wunt vote for Guvener B.

General C. is a drefle smart man:

He's ben on all sides thet give places or pelf; But consistency still wuz a part of his plan,—

He's ben true to *one* party,—an' thet is himself;—

So John P.

Robinson he

⁵ We live (are influenced) rather by example than by reason.

Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

General C he goes in fer the war;

He don't vally princerples more'n an old cud;

Wut did God make us raytional creeturs fer,

5 But glory an' gunpowder, plunder an' blood? So John P.

Robinson he

Sez he shall vote fer General C.

10 We were gittin' on nicely up here to our village,

With good old idees o' wut's right an' wut aint,

We kind o' thought Christ went agin war an'

15 pillage,

An' thet eppylett worn't the best mark of a saint;

But John P.

Robinson he

20 Sez this kind o' thing's an exploded idee.

The side of our country must ollers be took,

An' President Polk, you know, *he* is our country.

25 An' the angel thet writes all our sins in a book

Puts the *debit* to him, an' to us the *per contry*;

An' John P.

Robinson he

30 Sez this is his view o' the things to a T.

Parson Wilbur he calls all these argimunts lies;

Sez they're nothin' on airth but jest *fee, faw, fum*;

35 An' thet all this big talk of our destinies

Is half on it ign'ance, an' t'other half rum;

But John P.

Robinson he

Sez it aint no sech thing; an', of course, so must we.

40

Parson Wilbur sez *he* never heerd in his life

Thet th' Apostles rigged out in their swaller-tail coats,

45 An' marched round in front of a drum an' a fife,

To git some on 'em office, an' some on 'em votes;

But John P.

Robinson he

50

Sez they didn't know everythin' down in Judee.

Wal, it's a marcy we've gut folks to tell us
The rights an' the wrongs o' these matters,
I vow,—

God sends country lawyers, an' other wise fel-
lers,

To start the world's team wen it gits in a
slough;

For John P.

Robinson he

Sez the world'll go right, ef he hollers out 10
Geel!

[The attentive reader will doubtless have perceived in the foregoing poem an allusion to that pernicious sentiment,—“Our country, 15
right or wrong.” It is an abuse of language to call a certain portion of land, much more, certain personages, elevated for the time being to high station, our country. I would not sever nor loosen a single one of those ties by which 20
we are united to the spot of our birth, nor diminish by a tittle the respect due to the Magistrate. I love our own Bay State too well to do the one, and as for the other, I have myself for nigh forty years exercised, however unworthily, 25
the function of Justice of the Peace, having been called thereto by the unsolicited kindness of that most excellent man and upright patriot, Caleb Strong. *Patriæ fumus igne alieno luculentior* is best qualified with this,—*Ubi libertas, 30
ibi patria*.⁶ We are inhabitants of two worlds, and owe a double, not a divided, allegiance. In virtue of our clay, this little ball of earth exacts a certain loyalty of us, while, in our capacity as spirits, we are admitted citizens of an in- 35
visible and holier fatherland. There is a patriotism of the soul whose claim absolves us from our other and terrene fealty. Our true country is that ideal realm which we represent to ourselves under the names of religion, duty, and the like. Our terrestrial organizations are but far-off approaches to so fair a model, and all they are verily traitors who resist not any attempt to divert them from this their original 40
intendment. When, therefore, one would have us to fling up our caps and shout with the multitude, “*Our country, however bounded!*” he demands of us that we sacrifice the larger to the less, the higher to the lower, and that we yield 45
to the imaginary claims of a few acres of soil

⁶ “The smoke of one's fatherland is made brighter by the fire of another” is best qualified with this—
“Where liberty is, there is my country.”

our duty and privilege as liegemen of Truth
Our true country is bounded on the north and
the south, on the east and the west, by Justice,
and when she oversteps that invisible boundary-
line by so much as a hair's-breadth, she ceases
to be our mother, and chooses rather to be
looked upon *quasi noveica*.⁷ That is a hard
choice when our earthly love of country calls
upon us to tread one path and our duty points
us to another. We must make as noble and be-
coming an election as did Penelope between
Icarus and Ulysses Veiling our faces, we must
take silently the hand of Duty to follow her.
. . . H. W.]

from THE BIGLOW PAPERS,
SECOND SERIES (1866)

THE COURTIN'

(1848, ?, 1866)

“The only attempt I had ever made at anything like a pastoral (if that may be called an attempt which was the result almost of pure accident) was in ‘The Courtin’.’ While the introduction to the First Series was going through the press, I received word from the printer that there was a blank page left which must be filled. I sat down at once and improvised another fictitious ‘notice of the press,’ in which, because verse would fill up space more cheaply than prose, I inserted an extract from a supposed ballad of Mr. Biglow I kept no copy of it, and the printer, as directed, cut it off when the gap was filled. Presently I began to receive letters asking for the rest of it, sometimes for the *balance* of it. I had none, but to answer such demands, I patched a conclusion upon it in a later edition. Those who had only the first continued to importune me. Afterward, being asked to write it out as an autograph for the Baltimore Sanitary Commission Fair, I added other verses, into some of which I infused a little more sentiment in a homely way, and after a fashion completed it by sketching in the characters and making a connected story. Most likely I have spoiled it, but I shall put it at the end of this Introduction, to answer once for all those kindly importunings” (Lowell, in the “Introduction” to *The Biglow Papers*, 1866). See Arthur W. M. Voss, “The Evolution of Lowell’s ‘The Courtin’,” *American Literature*, XV, 42-50 (March, 1943).

God makes sech nights, all white an' still
Fur'z you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,
All silence an' all glisten.

⁷ As a stepmother.

Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
 An' peeked in thru' the winder,
 An' there sot Huld' all alone,
 'ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room's one side
 With half a cord o' wood in—
 There warn't no stoves (tell comfort died)
 To bake ye to a puddin'.

The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out
 Towards the pootiest, bless her,
 An' leetle flames danced all about
 The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,
 An' in amongst 'em rusted
 The ole queen's-arm thet grant'her Young
 Fetched back f'om Concord busted.

The very room, coz she was in,
 Seemed warm f'om floor to ceilin',
 An' she looked full ez rosy agin
 Ez the apples she was peelin'.

'Twas kin' o' kingdom-come to look
 On sech a blessed cretur,
 A dogrose blushin' to a brook
 Ain't modester nor sweeter.

He was six foot o' man, A 1,
 Clear grit an' human natur',
 None couldn't quicker pitch a ton
 Nor dror a furrer straighter.

He'd sparked it with full twenty gals,
 Hed squired 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,
 Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells—
 All is, he couldn't love 'em.

But long 'o her his veins 'ould run
 All crinkly like curled maple,
 The side she breshed felt full o' sun
 Ez a south slope in Ap'il.

She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing
 Ez hisn in the choir;
 My! when he made Ole Hunderd ring,
 She *knowed* the Lord was nigher.

An' she'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,
 When her new meetin'-bunnet

Felt somehow thru' its crown a pair
 O' blue eyes sot upun it.

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked *some!*
 5 She seemed to've gut a new soul,
 For she felt sartin-sure he'd come,
 Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,
 10 A-raspin' on the scraper,—
 All ways to once her feelins flew
 Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,
 15 Some doubtfle o' the sekle,
 His heart kep' goin' pity-pat,
 But hern went pity Zekle.

An' yit she gin her cheer a jerk
 20 Ez though she wished him funder,
 An' on her apples kep' to work,
 Parin' away like murder.

"You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?"
 25 "Wal . . . no . . . I come dasignin'"—
 "To see my Ma? She's sprinklin' clo'es
 Agin to-morrer's r'nin'."

To say why gals act so or so,
 30 Or don't, 'ould be presumin';
 Mebby to mean *yes* an' say *no*
 Comes nateral to women.

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
 35 Then stood a spell on t'other,
 An' on which one he felt the wust
 He couldn't ha' told ye nuther.

Says he, "I'd better call agin";
 40 Says she, "Think likely, Mister":
 Thet last word pricked him like a pin,
 An' . . . Wal, he up an' kist her.

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
 45 Huld' sot pale ez ashes,
 All kin' o' smily roun' the lips
 An' teary roun' the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind
 50 Whose naturs never vary,
 Like streams that keep a summer mind
 Snowhid in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt glued
 Too tight for all expressin',
 Tell mother see how metters stood,
 An' gin 'em both her blessin'.

Then her red come back like the tide
 Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
 An' all I know is they was cried
 In meetin' come nex' Sunday.

from A FABLE FOR CRITICS (1848)

"This *jeu d'esprit*," said Lowell, "was extemporized, I may fairly say, so rapidly was it written, purely for my own amusement and with no thought of publication. I sent daily instalments of it to a friend in New York, the late Charles F. Briggs. He urged me to let it be printed, and I at last consented to its anonymous publication. The secret was kept till after several persons had laid claim to its authorship."

A Fable for Critics is an important exception to the dictum which Brander Matthews used to repeat: "Criticism of one's contemporaries is nothing but conversation." Lowell's estimates often come surprisingly close to those of the twentieth-century critic. The *jeu d'esprit* is a better performance than Amy Lowell's *A Critical Fable* (1922), which it influenced and probably suggested. Lowell himself was influenced by Byron's *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* and Leigh Hunt's *Feast of the Poets*, which, as Poe pointed out, was probably Lowell's model. Poe, who did not like what Lowell had written of himself, charged that Lowell had included only "Bostonians." The charge, of course, is not literally true, but the provincial bias is noticeable.

The rimed title-page is given below. In the poem the portraits of American authors are sketched by Apollo, the god of poetry, as the flock of authors is led up by "Tityrus Griswold," the anthologist.

*Reader' walk up at once (it will soon be too late),
 and buy at a perfectly ruinous rate*

A FABLE FOR CRITICS:

OR, BETTER,

(I LIKE, AS A THING THAT THE READER'S FIRST
 FANCY MAY STRIKE, AN OLD-FASHIONED TITLE-PAGE,
 SUCH AS PRESENTS A TABULAR VIEW OF THE VOL-
 UME'S CONTENTS)

A GLANCE AT A FEW OF OUR LITERARY
 PROGENIES

(MRS. MALAPROP'S WORD)

FROM THE TUB OF DIOGENES;

A VOCAL AND MUSICAL MEDLEY,

THAT IS,

A SERIES OF JOKES

By A Wonderful Quiz

WHO ACCOMPANIES HIMSELF WITH A RUB-A-DUB-
 DUB, FULL OF SPIRIT AND GRACE, ON THE TOP OF
 THE TUB

*Set forth in October, the 31st day,
 In the year '48, G. P. Putnam, Broadway.*

- - - - -

I called this a "Fable for Critics"; you think it's
 More like a display of my rhythmical trinkets;
 My plot, like an icicle, 's slender and slippery,
 Every moment more slender, and likely to slip awry,
 5 And the reader unwilling *in loco desipere*¹
 Is free to jump over as much of my frippery
 As he fancies, and, if he's a provident skipper, he
 May have like Odysseus control of the gales,
 And get safe to port, ere his patience quite fails;
 10 Moreover, although 't is a slender return
 For your toil and expense, yet my paper will burn,
 And, if you have manfully struggled thus far with me,
 You may e'en twist me up, and just light your cigar with me:
 If too angry for that, you can tear me in pieces,
 15 And my *membra disjecta*² consign to the breezes,

- - - - -

I'd apologize here for my many digressions,
 Were it not that I'm certain to trip into fresh ones
 20 ('T is so hard to escape if you get in their mesh once);
 Just reflect, if you please, how 't is said by Horatius,
 That Mæonides³ nods now and then, and, my gracious!
 It certainly does look like a bit ominous
 When he gets under way with *ton d' apameibomenos*.⁴
 25 (Here a something occurs which I'll just clap a rhyme to,
 And say it myself, ere a Zoilus have time to,—
 Any author a nap like Van Winkle's may take,
 If he only contrive to keep readers awake,
 But he'll very soon find himself laid on the shelf,
 30 If *they* fall a-nodding when he nods himself.)

- - - - -

"But stay, here comes Tityrus Griswold, and leads on
 The flocks whom he first plucks alive, and then feeds on—
 A loud-cackling swarm, in whose feathers warm-drest,
 35 He goes for as perfect a—swan as the rest.

"There comes Emerson first, whose rich words, every one,
 Are like gold nails in temples to hang trophies on,
 Whose prose is grand verse, while his verse, the Lord knows,
 40 Is some of it pr— No, 't is not even prose;
 I'm speaking of metres; some poems have welled
 From those rare depths of soul that have ne'er been excelled;
 They're not epics, but that doesn't matter a pin,
 In creating, the only hard thing's to begin;
 45 A grass-blade's no easier to make than an oak;
 If you've once found the way, you've achieved the grand stroke;
 In the worst of his poems are mines of rich matter,
 But thrown in a heap with a crash and a clatter;

¹ "To have a lapse of wisdom (indulge in trifling) on the proper occasion" (Horace).

² Scattered parts or limbs.

³ Homer.

⁴ "And he, answering him," a phrase which Homer often uses.

Now it is not one thing nor another alone
 Makes a poem, but rather the general tone,
 The something pervading, uniting the whole,
 The before unconceived, unconceivable soul,
 So that just in removing this trifle or that, you 5
 Take away, as it were, a chief limb of the statue;
 Roots, wood, bark, and leaves singly perfect may be,
 But, clapt hodge-podge together, they don't make a tree.

"But to come back to Emerson (whom, by the way, 10
 I believe we left waiting),—his is, we may say,
 A Greek head on right Yankee shoulders, whose range
 Has Olympus for one pole, for t'other the Exchange;
 He seems, to my thinking (although I'm afraid 15
 The comparison must, long ere this, have been made),
 A Plotinus-Montaigne, where the Egyptian's gold mist
 And the Gascon's shrewd wit cheek-by-jowl co-exist;
 All admire, and yet scarcely six converts he's got
 To I don't (nor they either) exactly know what;
 For though he builds glorious temples, 't is odd 20
 He leaves never a doorway to get in a god.
 'T is refreshing to old-fashioned people like me
 To meet such a primitive Pagan as he,
 In whose mind all creation is duly respected
 As parts of himself—just a little projected; 25
 And who's willing to worship the stars and the sun,
 A convert to—nothing but Emerson.
 So perfect a balance there is in his head,
 That he talks of things sometimes as if they were dead;
 Life, nature, love, God, and affairs of that sort, 30
 He looks at as merely ideas; in short,
 As if they were fossils stuck round in a cabinet,
 Of such vast extent that our earth's a mere dab in it;
 Composed just as he is inclined to conjecture her,
 Namely, one part pure earth, ninety-nine parts pure lecturer; 35
 You are filled with delight at his clear demonstration,
 Each figure, word, gesture, just fits the occasion,
 With the quiet precision of science he'll sort 'em,
 But you can't help suspecting the whole a *post mortem*. 40

"There are persons, mole-blind to the soul's make and style,
 Who insist on a likeness 'twixt him and Carlyle;
 To compare him with Plato would be vastly fairer,
 Carlyle's the more burly, but E. is the rarer;
 He sees fewer objects, but clearer, truelier, 45
 If C.'s as original, E.'s more peculiar;
 That he's more of a man you might say of the one,
 Of the other he's more of an Emerson;
 C.'s the Titan, as shaggy of mind as of limb,—
 E. the clear-eyed Olympian, rapid and slim; 50
 The one's two thirds Norseman, the other half Greek,
 Where the one's most abounding, the other's to seek;

C.'s generals require to be seen in the mass,—
 E.'s specialties gain if enlarged by the glass;
 C. gives nature and God his own fits of the blues,
 And rims common-sense things with mystical hues,—
 5 E sits in a mystery calm and intense,
 And looks coolly around him with sharp common-sense;
 C. shows you how every-day matters unite
 With the dim transdiurnal recesses of night,—
 While E., in a plain, preternatural way,
 10 Makes mysteries matters of mere every day,
 C. draws all his characters quite *à la* Fuseli,—
 Not sketching their bundles of muscles and thews illy,
 He paints with a brush so untamed and profuse
 They seem nothing but bundles of muscles and thews;
 15 E. is rather like Flaxman,⁵ lines strait and severe,
 And a colorless outline, but full, round, and clear;—
 To the men he thinks worthy he frankly accords
 The design of a white marble statue in words.
 C. labors to get at the centre, and then
 20 Take a reckoning from there of his actions and men;
 E. calmly assumes the said centre as granted,
 And, given himself, has whatever is wanted.

"He has imitators in scores, who omit
 25 No part of the man but his wisdom and wit,—
 Who go carefully o'er the sky-blue of his brain,
 And when he has skimmed it once, skim it again;
 If at all they resemble him, you may be sure it is
 Because their shoals mirror his mists and obscurities,
 30 As a mud-puddle seems deep as heaven for a minute,
 While a cloud that floats o'er is reflected within it.

"There comes—,⁶ for instance; to see him's rare sport,
 Tread in Emerson's tracks with legs painfully short;
 35 How he jumps, how he strains, and gets red in the face,
 To keep step with the mystagogue's natural pace!
 He follows as close as a stick to a rocket,
 His fingers exploring the prophet's each pocket.
 Fie, for shame, brother bard; with good fruit of your own,
 40 Can't you let Neighbor Emerson's orchards alone?
 Besides, 't is no use, you'll not find e'en a core,—
 —⁷ has picked up all the windfalls before.
 They might strip every tree, and E. never would catch 'em,
 His Hesperides have no rude dragon to watch 'em;
 45 When they send him a dishful, and ask him to try 'em;
 He never suspects how the sly rogues came by 'em;
 He wonders why 't is there are none such his trees on,
 And thinks 'em the best he has tasted this season.

⁵ John Flaxman (1755-1826), an English sculptor.

⁶ Thoreau? In *Literary Friends and Acquaintance* (1900), p. 59. Howells describes Thoreau as "a quaint, stump figure of a man, whose effect of long trunk and short limbs was heightened by his fashionless trousers being let down too low."

⁷ Bronson Alcott or the younger W. E. Channing?

"There is Bryant, as quiet, as cool, and as dignified,
 As a smooth, silent iceberg, that never is ignifed,
 Save when by reflection 't is kindled o' nights
 With a semblance of flame by the chill Northern Lights.
 He may rank (Griswold says so) first bard of your nation 5
 (There's no doubt that he stands in supreme iceolation,)
 Your topmost Parnassus he may set his heel on,
 But no warm applauses come, peal following peal on,—
 He's too smooth and too polished to hang any zeal on:
 Unqualified merits, I'll grant, if you choose, he has 'em, 10
 But he lacks the one merit of kindling enthusiasm:
 If he stir you at all, it is just, on my soul,
 Like being stirred up with the very North Pole.

"He is very nice reading in summer, but *inter* 15
Nos, we don't want *extra* freezing in winter;
 Take him up in the depth of July, my advice is,
 When you feel an Egyptian devotion to ices.
 But deduct all you can, there's enough that's right good in him,
 He has a true soul for field, river, and wood in him; 20
 And his heart, in the minds of brick walls, or where'er it is,
 Glows, softens, and thrills with the tenderest charities—
 To you mortals that delve in this trade-ridden planet?
 No, to old Berkshire's hills, with their limestone and granite.
 If you're one who *in loco* (add *foco*⁸ here) *desipis*, 25
 You will get of his outermost heart (as I guess) a piece;
 But you'd get deeper down if you came as a precipice,
 And would break the last seal of its inwardest fountain,
 If you only could palm yourself off for a mountain.
 Mr. Quivis,⁹ or somebody quite as discerning, 30
 Some scholar who's hourly expecting his learning,
 Calls B. the American Wordsworth; but Wordsworth
 May be rated at more than your whole tuneful herd's worth.
 No, don't be absurd, he's an excellent Bryant;
 But, my friends, you'll endanger the life of your client, 35
 By attempting to stretch him up into a giant:
 If you choose to compare him, I think there are two per-
 -sons fit for a parallel—Thomson and Cowper;¹⁰
 I don't mean exactly,—there's something of each,
 There's T.'s love of nature, C.'s penchant to preach; 40
 Just mix up their minds so that C.'s spice of craziness
 Shall balance and neutralize T.'s turn for laziness,
 And it gives you a brain cool, quite frictionless, quiet,
 Whose internal police nips the buds of all riot,—
 A brain like a permanent strait-jacket put on 45
 The heart that strives vainly to burst off a button,—
 A brain which, without being slow or mechanic,

⁸ "At one's own fireside." Cf. note 1.

⁹ Anybody; whoever you please.

¹⁰ To demonstrate quickly and easily how per-
 -versely absurd 't is to sound this name *Cowper*,
 As people in general call him named *super*,
 I remark that he rhymes it himself with horse-
 trooper. (Author's note.)

Does more than a larger less drilled, more volcanic;
 He's a Cowper condensed, with no craziness bitten,
 And the advantage that Wordsworth before him had written.

- 5 "But my dear little bardlings, don't pick up your ears
 Nor suppose I would rank you and Bryant as peers;
 If I call him an iceberg, I don't mean to say
 There is nothing in that which is grand in its way;
 He is almost the one of your poets that knows
 10 How much grace, strength, and dignity lie in Repose;
 If he sometimes fall short, he is too wise to mar
 His thought's modest fulness by going too far;
 'T would be well if your authors should all make a trial
 Of what virtue there is in severe self-denial,
 15 And measure their writings by Hesiod's¹¹ staff,
 Which teaches that all has less value than half.

- "There is Whittier, whose swelling and vehement heart
 Strains the strait-breasted drab of the Quaker apart,
 20 And reveals the live Man, still supreme and erect,
 Underneath the bemummying wrappers of sect;
 There was ne'er a man born who had more of the swing
 Of the true lyric bard and all that kind of thing;
 And his failures arise (though he seem not to know it)
 25 From the very same cause that has made him a poet,—
 A fervor of mind which knows no separation
 'Twixt simple excitement and pure inspiration,
 As my Pythoness erst sometimes erred from not knowing
 If 't were I or mere wind through her tripod was blowing;
 30 Let his mind once get head in its favorite direction
 And the torrent of verse bursts the dams of reflection,
 While, borne with the rush of the metre along,
 The poet may chance to go right or go wrong,
 Content with the whirl and delirium of song;
 35 Then his grammar's not always correct, nor his rhymes,
 And he's prone to repeat his own lyrics sometimes,
 Not his best, though, for those are struck off at white-heats
 When the heart in his breast like a trip-hammer beats,
 And can ne'er be repeated again any more
 40 Than they could have been carefully plotted before:
 Like old what's-his-name there at the battle of Hastings
 (Who, however, gave more than mere rhythmical bastings),
 Our Quaker leads off metaphorical fights
 For reform and whatever they call human rights,
 45 Both singing and striking in front of the war,
 And hitting his foes with the mallet of Thor;
Anne haec, one exclaims, on beholding his knocks,
Vestis filii tui, O leather-clad Fox?¹²
 Can that be thy son, in the battle's mid din,

¹¹ Hesiod (*about* 735 B.C.), a Greek poet, author of *Works and Days*.

¹² "Is not this the robe of thy son?" Cf. Genesis, xxxvii:33. George Fox (1624-1691) was the founder of the Society of Friends (Quakers).

Preaching brotherly love and then driving it in
To the brain of the tough old Goliath of sin,
With the smoothest of pebbles from Castaly's spring
Impressed on his hard moral sense with a sling?

5

"All honor and praise to the right-hearted bard,
Who was true to The Voice when such service was hard,
Who himself was so free he dared sing for the slave—
When to look but a protest in silence was brave;
All honor and praise to the women and men 10
Who spoke out for the dumb and the down-trodden then!
It needs not to name them, already for each
I see History preparing the statue and niche;
They were harsh, but shall *you* be so shocked at hard words
Who have beaten your pruning-hooks up into swords, 15
Whose rewards and hurrahs men are surer to gain
By the reaping of men and of women than grain?
Why should *you* stand aghast at their fierce wordy war, if
You scalp one another for Bank or for Tariff?
Your calling them cut-throats and knaves all day long 20
Doesn't prove that the use of hard language is wrong;
While the World's heart beats quicker to think of such men
As signed Tyranny's doom with a bloody steel pen,
While on Fourth-of-July's beardless orators fright one
With hints at Harmodius and Aristogeiton, 25
You need not look shy at your sisters and brothers
Who stab with sharp words for the freedom of others;—
No, a wreath, twine a wreath for the loyal and true
Who, for the sake of the many, dared stand with the few,
Not of blood-spattered laurel for enemies braved, 30
But of broad, peaceful oak-leaves for citizens saved!

- - - - -

"There is Hawthorne, with genius so shrinking and rare
That you hardly at first see the strength that is there; 35
A frame so robust, with a nature so sweet,
So earnest, so graceful, so lithe and so fleet,
Is worth a descent from Olympus to meet;
'T is as if a rough oak that for ages had stood,
With his gnarled bony branches like ribs of the wood, 40
Should bloom, after cycles of struggle and scathe,
With a single anemone trembly and rathe;
His strength is so tender, his wildness so meek,
That a suitable parallel sets one to seek,—
He's a John Bunyan Fouqué,¹³ a Puritan Tieck;¹⁴ 45
When Nature was shaping him, clay was not granted
For making so full-sized a man as she wanted,
So, to fill out her model, a little she spared
From some finer-grained stuff for a woman prepared,

¹³ Fouqué (1777-1843), a German poet and novelist, author of *Undine*.

¹⁴ Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853), German writer of fiction.

And she could not have hit a more excellent plan
For making him fully and perfectly man.

- - - - -

- 5 "Here's Cooper, who's written six volumes to show
He's as good as a lord; well, let's grant that he's so;
If a person prefer that description of praise,
Why, a coronet's certainly cheaper than bays;
But he need take no pains to convince us he's not
10 (As his enemies say) the American Scott.
Choose any twelve men, and let C. read aloud
That one of his novels of which he's most proud,
And I'd lay any bet that, without ever quitting
Their box, they'd be all, to a man, for acquitting.
15 He has drawn you one character, though, that is new,
One wildflower he's plucked that is wet with the dew
Of this fresh Western world, and, the thing not to mince,
He has done naught but copy it ill ever since;
His Indians, with proper respect be it said,
20 Are just Natty Bumppo, daubed over with red,
And his very Long Toms¹⁵ are the same useful Nat,
Rigged up in duck pants and a sou'wester hat
(Though once in a Coffin, a good chance was found
To have slipped the old fellow away underground).
25 All his other men-figures are clothes upon sticks,
The *dernière chemise*¹⁶ of a man in a fix
(As a captain besieged, when his garrison's small,
Sets up caps upon poles to be seen o'er the wall);
And the women he draws from one model don't vary,
30 All sappy as maples and flat as a prairie.
When a character's wanted, he goes to the task
As a cooper would do in composing a cask;
He picks out the staves, of their qualities heedful,
Just hoops them together as tight as is needful,
35 And, if the best fortune should crown the attempt, he
Has made at the most something wooden and empty.

- "Don't suppose I would underrate Cooper's abilities;
If I thought you'd do that, I should feel very ill at ease;
40 The men who have given to *one* character life
And objective existence are not very rife;
You may number them all, both prose-writers and singers,
Without overrunning the bounds of your fingers,
And Natty won't go to oblivion quicker
45 Than Adams the Parson or Primrose the vicar.¹⁷

 "There is one thing in Cooper I like, too, and that is
That on manners he lectures his countrymen gratis;

¹⁵ Long Tom Coffin from Nantucket is a character in Cooper's *The Pilot*.

¹⁶ "Last undergarment."

¹⁷ Lowell refers to Parson Adams in Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* and Dr. Primrose in Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*.

Not precisely so either, because, for a rarity,
 He is paid for his tickets in unpopularity.
 Now he may overcharge his American pictures,
 But you'll grant there's a good deal of truth in his strictures;
 And I honor the man who is willing to sink 5
 Half his present repute for the freedom to think,
 And, when he has thought, be his cause strong or weak,
 Will risk t'other half for the freedom to speak,
 Caring naught for what vengeance the mob has in store,
 Let that mob be the upper ten thousand or lower. 10

"There are truths you Americans need to be told,
 And it never'll refute them to swagger and scold;
 John Bull, looking o'er the Atlantic, in choler
 At your aptness for trade, says you worship the dollar; 15
 But to scorn such eye-dollar-try's what very few do,
 And John goes to that church as often as you do.
 No matter what John say, don't try to outcrow him,
 'T is enough to go quietly on and outgrow him;
 Like most fathers, Bull hates to see Number One 20
 Displacing himself in the mund of his son,
 And detests the same faults in himself he'd neglected
 When he sees them again in his child's glass reflected;
 To love one another you're too like by half;
 If he is a bull, you're a pretty stout calf, 25
 And tear your own pasture for naught but to show
 What a nice pair of horns you're beginning to grow.

"There are one or two things I should just like to hint,
 For you don't often get the truth told you in print; 30
 The most of you (this is what strikes all beholders)
 Have a mental and physical stoop in the shoulders;
 Though you ought to be free as the winds and the waves,
 You've the gait and the manners of run-away slaves;
 Though you brag of your New World, you don't half believe in it; 35
 And as much of the Old as is possible weave in it;
 Your goddess of freedom, a tight, buxom girl,
 With lips like a cherry and teeth like a pearl,
 With eyes bold as Herē's,¹⁸ and hair floating free,
 And full of the sun as the spray of the sea, 40
 Who can sing at a husking or romp at a shearing,
 Who can trip through the forests alone without fearing,
 Who can drive home the cows with a song through the grass,
 Keeps glancing aside into Europe's cracked glass,
 Hides her red hands in gloves, pinches up her lithe waist, 45
 And makes herself wretched with transmarine taste;
 She loses her fresh country charm when she takes
 Any mirror except her own rivers and lakes.

"You steal Englishmen's books and think Englishmen's thought, 50
 With their salt on her tail your wild eagle is caught;

¹⁸ Herē (or Hera) is Juno.

Your literature suits its each whisper and motion
 To what will be thought of it over the ocean;
 The cast clothes of Europe your statesmanship tries
 And mumbles again the old blarneys and lies,—
 5 Forget Europe wholly, your veins throb with blood,
 To which the dull current in hers is but mud:
 Let her sneer, let her say your experiment fails,
 In her voice, there's a tremble e'en now while she rails,
 And your shore will soon be in the nature of things
 10 Covered thick with guilt drift-wood of cast-away kings,
 Where alone, as it were in a Longfellow's Waif,
 Her fugitive pieces will find themselves safe
 O my friends, thank your god, if you have one, that he
 'Twixt the Old World and you set the gulf of a sea;
 15 Be strong-backed, brown-handed, upright as your pines,
 By the scale of a hemisphere shape your designs,
 Be true to yourselves and this new nineteenth age,
 As a statue by Powers, or a picture by Page,
 Plough, sail, forge, build, carve, paint, make all over new,
 20 To your own New-World instincts contrive to be true,
 Keep your ears open wide to the Future's first call,
 Be whatever you will, but yourselves first of all,
 Stand fronting the dawn on Toil's heaven-scaling peaks,
 And become my new race of more practical Greeks."
 25

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Here Miranda¹⁹ came up, and said, "Phœbus! you know
 That the Infinite Soul has its infinite woe,
 As I ought to know, having lived cheek by jowl,
 30 Since the day I was born, with the Infinite Soul;
 I myself introduced, I myself, I alone,
 To my Land's better life authors solely my own,
 Who the sad heart of earth on their shoulders have taken,
 Whose works sound a depth by Life's quiet unshaken,
 35 Such as Shakespeare, for instance, the Bible, and Bacon,
 Not to mention my own works; Time's nadir is fleet,
 And, as for myself, I'm quite out of conceit"—

"Quite out of conceit! I'm enchanted to hear it,"
 40 Cried Apollo aside, "Who'd have thought she was near it?
 To be sure, one is apt to exhaust those commodities
 One uses too fast, yet in this case as odd it is
 As if Neptune should say to his turbot and whittings,
 'I'm as much out of salt as Miranda's own writings'
 45 (Which, as she in her own happy manner has said,
 Sound a depth, for 't is one of the functions of lead).
 She often has asked me if I could not find
 A place somewhere near me that suited her mind;
 I know but a single one vacant, which she
 50 With her rare talent that way, would fit to a T.

¹⁹ Margaret Fuller.

And it would not imply any pause or cessation
 In the work she esteems her peculiar vocation,—
 She may enter on duty to-day, if she chooses,
 And remain Tiring-woman for life to the Muses.”

5

“There comes Poe, with his raven, like Barnaby Rudge,²⁰
 Three fifths of him genius and two fifths sheer fudge,
 Who talks like a book of iambs and pentameters,
 In a way to make people of common sense damn metres, 10
 Who has written some things quite the best of their kind,
 But the heart somehow seems all squeezed out by the mind,
 Who— But hey-day! What’s this? Messieurs Mathews²¹ and Poe,
 You mustn’t fling mud-balls at Longfellow so,
 Does it make a man worse that his character’s such 15
 As to make his friends love him (as you think) too much?
 Why, there is not a bard at this moment alive
 More willing than he that his fellows should thrive;
 While you are abusing him thus, even now
 He would help either one of you out of a slough; 20
 You may say that he’s smooth and all that till you’re hoarse,
 But remember that elegance also is force;
 After polishing granite as much as you will,
 The heart keeps its tough old persistency still;
 Deduct all you can, *that* still keeps you at bay; 25
 Why, he’ll live till men weary of Collins and Gray.
 I’m not over-fond of *Greek* metres in English,
 To me rhyme’s a gain, so it be not too jinglish,
 And your modern hexameter verses are no more
 Like Greek ones than sleek Mr. Pope is like Homer; 30
 As the roar of the sea to the coo of a pigeon is,
 So, compared to your moderns, sounds old Melesigenes;
 I may be too partial, the reason, perhaps, o’t is
 That I’ve heard the old blind man recite his own rhapsodies,
 And my ear with that music impregnate may be, 35
 Like the poor exiled shell with the soul of the sea,
 Or as one can’t bear Strauss when his nature is cloven
 To its deeps within deeps by the stroke of Beethoven;
 But, set that aside, and ’t is truth that I speak,
 Had Theocritus²² written in English, not Greek, 40
 I believe that his exquisite sense would scarce change a line
 In that rare, tender, virgin-like pastoral Evangeline.
 That’s not ancient nor modern, its place is apart
 Where time has no sway, in the realm of pure Art,
 ’T is a shrine of retreat from Earth’s hubbub and strife 45
 As quiet and chaste as the author’s own life.

²⁰ The raven in Dickens’s *Barnaby Rudge* (1841) probably suggested to Poe the subject of his famous poem.

²¹ Cornelius Mathews (1817-1889), a New York magazinist and author of several forgotten books.

²² A late Greek pastoral poet from Sicily.

- "What! Irving? thrice welcome, warm heart and fine brain,
 You bring back the happiest spirit from Spain,
 And the gravest sweet humor, that ever were there
 Since Cervantes met death in his gentle despair;
 5 Nay, don't be embarrassed, nor look so beseeching,
 I shan't run directly against my own preaching,
 And, having just laughed at their Raphaels and Dantes,
 Go to setting you up beside matchless Cervantes,
 But allow me to speak what I honestly feel,—
 10 To a true poet-heart add the fun of Dick Steele,
 Throw in all of Addison, *minus* the chill,
 With the whole of that partnership's stock and good-will,
 Mix well, and while stirring, hum o'er, as a spell,
 The fine *old* English Gentleman, simmer it well,
 15 Sweeten just to your own private liking, then strain,
 That only the finest and clearest remain,
 Let it stand out of doors till a soul it receives
 From the warm lazy sun loitering down through green leaves,
 And you'll find a choice nature, not wholly deserving
 20 A name either English or Yankee,—just Irving."

- - - - -

- Here, "Forgive me, Apollo," I cried, "while I pour
 My heart out to my birthplace: O loved more and more
 25 Dear Baystate, from whose rocky bosom thy sons
 Should suck milk, strong-will-giving, brave, such as runs
 In the veins of old Graylock—who is it that dares
 Call thee pedler, a soul wrapped in bank-books and shares?
 It is false? She's a poet! I see, as I write,
 30 Along the far railroad the steam-snake glide white,
 The cataract-throb of her mill-hearts I hear,
 The swift strokes of trip-hammers weary my ear,
 Sledges ring upon anvils, through logs the saw screams,
 Blocks swing to their place, beetles drive home the beams;—
 35 It is songs such as these that she croons to the din
 Of her fast-flying shuttles, year out and year in,
 While from earth's farthest corner there comes not a breeze
 But wafts her the buzz of her gold-gleaning bees:
 What though these horn hands have as yet found small time
 40 For painting and sculpture and music and rhyme?
 These will come in due order; the need that pressed sorest
 Was to vanquish the seasons, the ocean, the forest,
 To bridle and harness the rivers, the stream,
 Making those whirl her mill-wheels, this tug in her team,
 45 To vassalize old tyrant Winter, and make
 Him delve surlily for her on river and lake,—
 When this New World was parted, she strove not to shirk
 Her lot in the heirdom, the tough, silent Work,
 The hero-share ever from Herakles²³ down
 50 To Odin, the Earth's iron sceptre and crown:
 Yes, thou dear, noble Mother! if ever men's praise

²³ Hercules.

Could be claimed for creating heroical lays,
 Thou hast won it; if ever the laurel divine
 Crowned the Maker and Builder, that glory is thine!
 Thy songs are right epic, they tell how this rude
 Rock-rib of our earth here was tamed and subdued; 5
 Thou hast written them plain on the face of the planet
 In brave, deathless letters of iron and granite,
 Thou hast printed them deep for all time; they are set
 From the same runic type-fount and alphabet
 With thy stout Berkshire hills and the arms of thy Bay,— 10
 They are staves from the burly old Mayflower lay.
 If the drones of the Old World, in querulous ease,
 Ask thy Art and thy Letters, point proudly to these,
 Or, if they deny these are Letters and Art,
 Toil on with the same old invincible heart; 15
 Thou art rearing the pedestal broad-based and grand
 Whereon the fair shapes of the Artist shall stand,
 And creating, through labors undaunted and long,
 The theme song for all Sculpture and Painting and Song! 20

"But my good mother Baystate wants no praise of mine,
 She learned from *her* mother a precept divine
 About something that butters no parsnips, her *forte*
 In another direction lies, work is her sport
 (Though she'll curtsy and set her cap straight, that she will, 25
 If you talk about Plymouth and red Bunker's hill).
 Dear, notable good wife! by this time of night,
 Her hearth is swept neatly, her fire burning bright,
 And she sits in a chair (of home plan and make) rocking,
 Musing much, all the while, as she darns on a stocking, 30
 Whether turkeys will come pretty high next Thanksgiving,
 Whether flour'll be so dear, for, as sure as she's living,
 She will use rye-and-injun then, whether the pig
 By this time ain't got pretty tolerable big,
 And whether to sell it outright will be best, 35
 Or to smoke hams and shoulders and salt down the rest,
 At this minute, she'd swop all my verses, ah, cruel!
 For the last patent stove that is saving of fuel;
 So I'll just let Apollo go on, for his phiz
 Shows I've kept him awaiting too long as it is." 40

"If our friend, there, who seems a reporter, is done
 With his burst of emotion, why, *I* will go on,"
 Said Apollo; some smiled, and, indeed, I must own
 There was something sarcastic, perhaps, in his tone:— 45

"There's Holmes, who is matchless among you for wit;
 A Leyden-jar always full-charged, from which flit
 The electrical tingles of hit after hit;
 In long poems 'tis painful sometimes, and invites 50
 A thought of the way the new Telegraph writes,
 Which pricks down its little sharp sentences spitefully

As if you got more than you'd title to rightfully,
 And you find yourself hoping its wild father Lightning
 Would flame in for a second and give you a fright'ning.
 He has a perfect sway of what *I* call a sham metre,
 5 But many admire it, the English pentameter,
 And Campbell, I think, wrote most commonly worse,
 With less nerve, swing, and fire in the same kind of verse,
 Nor e'er achieved aught in 't so worthy of praise
 As the tribute of Holmes to the grand *Marseillaise*.
 10 You went crazy last year over Bulwer's New Timon;—
 Why, if B., to the day of his dying, should rhyme on,
 Heaping verses on verses and tomes upon tomes,
 He could ne'er reach the best point and vigor of Holmes.
 His are just the fine hands, too, to weave you a lyric
 15 Full of fancy, fun, feeling, or spiced with satiric
 In a measure so kindly, you doubt if the toes
 That are trodden upon are your own or your foes

"There is Lowell, who's striving Parnassus to climb
 20 With a whole bale of *isms* tied together with rhyme,
 He might get on alone, spite of brambles and boulders,
 But he can't with that bundle he has on his shoulders,
 The top of the hill he will ne'er come nigh reaching
 Till he learns the distinction 'twixt singing and preaching;
 25 His lyre has some chords that would ring pretty well,
 But he'd rather by half make a drum of the shell,
 And rattle away till he's old as Methusalem,
 At the head of a march to the last new Jerusalem."

"But what's that? a mass-meeting? No, there come in lots,
 30 The American Bulwers, Disraelis, and Scotts,
 And in short the American everything elses,
 Each charging the others with envies and jealousies;—
 By the way, 't is a fact that displays what profusions
 35 Of all kinds of greatness bless free institutions,
 That while the Old World has produced barely eight
 Of such poets as all men agree to call great,
 And of other great characters hardly a score
 (One might safely say less than that rather than more),
 40 With you every year a whole crop is begotten,
 They're as much of a staple as corn is, or cotton;
 Why, there's scarcely a huddle of log-huts and shanties
 That has not brought forth its own Miltons and Dantes;
 I myself know ten Byrons, one Coleridge, three Shelleys,
 45 Two Raphaels, six Titians (I think, one Apelles,
 Leonardos and Rubenses plenty as lichens,
 One (but that one is plenty) American Dickens,
 A whole flock of Lambs, any number of Tennysons,—
 In short, if a man has the luck to have any sons,
 50 He may feel pretty certain that one out of twain
 Will be some very great person over again.

Let us glance for a moment, 't is well worth the pains,
 And note what an average graveyard contains;
 There lie levellers levelled, duns done up themselves,
 There are booksellers finally laid on their shelves,
 Horizontally there lie upright politicians, 5
 Dose-adosed with their patients sleep faultless physicians,
 There are slave-drivers quietly whipped under ground,
 There bookbinders, done up in boards, are fast bound,
 There card-players wait till the last trump be played,
 There all the choice spirits get finally laid, 10
 There the babe that's unborn is supplied with a berth,
 There men without legs get their six feet of earth,
 There lawyers repose, each wrapped up in his case,
 There seekers of office are sure of a place,
 There defendant and plaintiff get equally cast, 15
 There shoemakers quietly stick to the last,
 There brokers at length become silent as stocks,
 There stage-drivers sleep without quitting their box,
 And so forth and so forth and so forth and so on,
 With this kind of stuff one might endlessly go on; 20
 To come to the point, I may safely assert you
 Will find in each yard every cardinal virtue,²⁴
 Each has six truest patriots; four discoverers of ether,
 Who never had thought on 't nor mentioned it either;
 Ten poets, the greatest who ever wrote rhyme: 25
 Two hundred and forty first men of their time:
 One person whose portrait just gave the least hint
 Its original had a most horrible squint:
 One critic, most (what do they call it?) reflective,
 Who never had used the phrase ob- or subjective: 30
 Forty fathers of Freedom, of whom twenty bred
 Their sons for the rice-swamps, at so much a head,
 And their daughters for—faugh! thirty mothers of Gracchi:
 Non-resistants who gave many a spiritual black-eye
 Eight true friends of their kind, one of whom was a jailer: 35
 Four captains almost as astounding as Taylor:
 Two dozen of Italy's exiles who shoot us his
 Kaisership daily, stern pen-and-ink Brutuses,
 Who, in Yankee back-parlors, with crucified smile,²⁵
 Mount serenely their country's funereal pyle: 40
 Ninety-nine Irish heroes, ferocious rebellers
 'Gainst the Saxon in cis-marine garrets and cellars,
 Who shake their dread fists o'er the sea and all that,—
 As long as a copper drops into the hat:
 Nine hundred Teutonic republicans stark 45
 From Vaterland's battle just won—in the Park,
 Who the happy profession of martyrdom take
 Whenever it gives them a chance at a steak:
 Sixty-two second Washingtons: two or three Jacksons:

²⁴ (And at this just conclusion will surely arrive

That the goodness of earth is more dead than alive.) (Author's note.)

²⁵ Not forgetting their tea and their toast, though, the while. (Author's note.)

And so many everythings-else that it racks one's
 Poor memory too much to continue the list,
 Especially now they no longer exist;—
 I would merely observe that you've taken to giving
 5 The puffs that belong to the dead to the living,
 And that somehow your trump-of-contemporary-doom's tones
 Is tuned after old dedications and tombstones."

- - - - -

10 "Nature fits all her children with something to do,
 He who would write and can't write can surely review,
 Can set up a small booth as critic and sell us his
 Petty conceit and his pettier jealousies;
 Thus a lawyer's apprentice, just out of his teens,
 15 Will do for the Jeffrey of six magazines;
 Having read Johnson's lives of the poets half through,
 There's nothing on earth he's not competent to;
 He reviews with as much nonchalance as he whistles,—
 He goes through a book and just picks out the thistles;
 20 It matters not whether he blame or commend,
 If he's bad as a foe, he's far worse as a friend:
 Let an author but write what's above his poor scope,
 He goes to work gravely and twists up a rope,
 And, inviting the world to see punishment done,
 25 Hangs himself up to bleach in the wind and the sun;
 'T is delightful to see, when a man comes along,
 Who has anything in him peculiar and strong,
 Every cockboat that swims clear its fierce (pop) gundeck at him,
 And make as he passes its ludicrous Peck at him—"

30 Here Miranda came up and began, "As to that—"
 Apollo at once seized his gloves, cane, and hat,
 And seeing the place getting rapidly cleared,
 I too snatched my notes and forthwith disappeared.

THE ORIGIN OF DIDACTIC POETRY (1857)

On August 28, 1865, Lowell wrote to Charles Eliot Norton: "I shall never be a poet till I get out of the pulpit, and New England was all meeting-house when I was growing up." Compare the lines on himself in *A Fable for Critics*. As a literary critic, Lowell knew the perils of didacticism in poetry, but he was never able entirely to free himself from them. The poem was published in the first number of the *Atlantic Monthly*.

When wise Minerva still was young
 And just the least romantic,

Soon after from Jove's head she flung
 That preternatural antic,
 'T is said, to keep from idleness
 Or flirting, those twin curses,
 5 She spent her leisure, more or less,
 In writing po—, no, verses.

How nice they were! to rhyme with *far*
 A kind *star* did not tarry;
 10 The metre, too, was regular
 As schoolboy's dot and carry;
 And full they were of pious plums,
 So extra-super-moral,—

For sucking Virtue's tender gums
Most tooth-enticing coral.

A clean, fair copy she prepares,
Makes sure of moods and tenses,
With her own hand,—for prudence spares
A man-(or woman)-uensis;
Complete, and tied with ribbons proud,
She hinted soon how cosy a
Treat it would be to read them loud
After next day's Ambrosia.

The Gods thought not it would amuse
So much as Homer's Odyssees,
But could not very well refuse
The properest of Goddesses;
So all sat round in attitudes
Of various dejection,
As with a *hem!* the queen of prudes
Began her grave prelection.

At the first pause Zeus said, "Well sung!—
I mean—ask Phœbus,—*he* knows."
Says Phœbus, "Zounds! a wolf's among
Admetus's merinos!
Fine! very fine! but I must go;
They stand in need of me there;
Excuse me!" snatched his stick, and so
Plunged down the gladdened ether.

With the next gap, Mars said, "For me
Don't wait,—naugh could be finer,
But I'm engaged at half past three,—
A fight in Asia Minor!"
Then Venus lisped, "I'm sorely tried,
These duty-calls are vip'rous;
But I *must* go; I have a bride
To see about in Cyprus."

Then Bacchus,—*"I must say good-by,
Although my peace it jeopards;
I meet a man at four, to try
A well-broke pair of leopards."*
His words woke Hermes. "Ah!" he said,
"I so love moral theses!"
Then winked at Hebe, who turned red,
And smoothed her apron's creases.

Just then Zeus snored,—the Eagle drew
His head the wing from under;
Zeus snored,—o'er startled Greece there flew
The many-volumed thunder.

Some augurs counted nine, some, ten;
Some said 't was war, some, famine,
And all, that other-minded men
Would get a precious —.

5 Proud Pallas sighed, "It will not do;
Against the Muse I've sinned, oh!"
And her torn rhymes sent flying through
Olympus's back window.
10 Then, packing up a peplus clean,
She took the shortest path thence,
And opened, with a mind serene,
A Sunday-school in Athens.

15 The verses? Some in ocean swilled,
Killed every fish that bit to 'em;
Some Galen¹ caught, and, when distilled,
Found morphine the residuum;
But some that rotted on the earth
20 Sprang up again in copies,
And gave two strong narcotics birth,
Didactic verse and poppies.

Years after, when a poet asked
25 The Goddess's opinion,
As one whose soul its wings had tasked
In Art's clear-aired dominion,
"Discriminate," she said, "betimes;
The Muse is unforgiving;
30 Put all your beauty in your rhymes,
Your morals in your living."

from UNDER THE OLD ELM

35 POEM READ AT CAMBRIDGE ON THE HUN-
DREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF WASHINGTON'S
TAKING COMMAND OF THE AMERICAN
ARMY, 3D JULY, 1775

(1875; 1875)

40 "Under the Old Elm" is not a great ode com-
parable to Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Im-
mortality," but it is an admirable oration on Wash-
ington. It would be difficult to find in prose so
45 excellent a characterization of one whom all praise
and few take the trouble to understand. On July
6, 1875, Lowell wrote:

50 "We, too, here in my birthplace, having found out
that something happened here a hundred years ago,
must have our centennial; and, since my friend and

¹ Galen (A.D. 130-201) was a famous physician.

townsman Dr. Holmes could n't be had, I felt bound to do the poetry for the day. We have still standing the elm under which Washington took command of the *American* (till then *provincial*) army, and under which also Whitefield had preached some thirty years before. I took advantage of the occasion to hold out a hand of kindly reconciliation to Virginia. I could do it with the profounder feeling, that no family lost more than mine by the Civil War Three nephews (the hope of our race) were killed in one or other of the Virginia battles, and three cousins on other of those bloody fields."

III

1

Beneath our consecrated elm
A century ago he stood,
Famed vaguely for that old fight in the wood
Whose red surge sought, but could not over-
whelm
The life foredoomed to wield our rough-hewn
helm:—
From colleges, where now the gown
To arms had yielded, from the town,
Our rude self-summoned levies flocked to see
The new-come chiefs and wonder which was he.
No need to question long; close-lipped and tall,
Long trained in murder-brooding forests lone
To bridle others' clamors and his own,
Firmly erect, he towered above them all,
The incarnate discipline that was to free
With iron curb that armed democracy.

2

A motley rout was that which came to stare,
In raiment tanned by years of sun and storm,
Of every shape that was not uniform,
Dotted with regimentals here and there;
An army all of captains, used to pray
And stiff in fight, but serious drill's despair,
Skilled to debate their orders, not obey;
Deacons were there, selectmen, men of note
In half-tamed hamlets ambushed round with
woods,
Ready to settle Freewill by a vote,
But largely liberal to its private moods;
Prompt to assert by manners, voice, or pen,
Or ruder arms, their rights as Englishmen,
Nor much fastidious as to how and when:
Yet seasoned stuff and fittest to create
A thought-staid army or a lasting state:
Haughty they said he was, at first; severe;

But owned, as all men own, the steady hand
Upon the bridle, patient to command,
Prized, as all prize, the justice pure from fear,
And learned to honor first, then love him, then
revere.

Such power there is in clear-eyed self-restraint
And purpose clean as light from every selfish
taint. - - -

v

4

Minds strong by fits, irregularly great,
That flash and darken like revolving lights,
Catch more the vulgar eye unschooled to wait
On the long curve of patient days and nights
Rounding a whole life to the circle fair
Of orb'd fulfilment; and this balanced soul,
So simple in its grandeur, coldly bare
Of draperies theatric, standing there
In perfect symmetry of self-control,
Seems not so great at first, but greater grows
Still as we look, and by experience learn
How grand this quiet is, how nobly stern
The discipline that wrought through life-long
throes
That energetic passion of repose.

5

A nature too decorous and severe,
Too self-respectful in its griefs and joys,
For ardent girls and boys
Who find no genius in a mind so clear
That its grave depths seem obvious and near,
Nor a soul great that made so little noise.
They feel no force in that calm-cadenced phrase,
The habitual full-dress of his well-bred mind,
That seems to pace the minuet's courtly maze
And tell of ampler leisuress, roomier length of
days.
His firm-based brain, to self so little kind
That no tumultuary blood could blind,
Formed to control men, not amaze,
Looms not like those that borrow height of
haze:
It was a world of statelier movement then
Than this we fret in, he a denizen
Of that ideal Rome that made a man for
men. - - -

VIII

Virginia gave us this imperial man
Cast in the massive mould

Of those high-statured ages old
Which into grander forms our mortal metal
ran;

She gave us this unblemished gentleman:
What shall we give her back but love and praise 5
As in the dear old unrestrained days
Before the inevitable wrong began?
Mother of States and undiminished men,
Thou gavest us a country, giving him,
And we owe alway what we owed thee then: 10
The boon thou wouldst have snatched from us
agen

Shines as before with no abatement dim.
A great man's memory is the only thing
With influence to outlast the present whim 15
And bind us as when here he knit our golden
ring.

All of him that was subject to the hours
Lies in thy soil and makes it part of ours:
Across more recent graves,
Where unresentful Nature waves
Her pennons o'er the shot-ploughed sod,
Proclaiming the sweet Truce of God,
We from this consecrated plain stretch out
Our hands as free from afterthought or doubt 25
As here the united North
Poured her embrownèd manhood forth
In welcome of our savior and thy son.
Through battle we have better learned thy
worth,

The long-breathed valor and undaunted will,
Which, like his own, the day's disaster done,
Could, safe in manhood, suffer and be still.
Both thine and ours the victory hardly won;
If ever with distempered voice or pen
We have misdeemed thee, here we take it back,
And for the dead of both don common black.
Be to us evermore as thou wast then,
As we forget thou hast not always been,
Mother of States and unpolluted men,
Virginia, fitly named from England's manly
queen!

CREDIDIMUS JOVEM REGNARE

(1871?; 1887)

"I have furbished up for the February *Atlantic* a
longish piece of octosyllabic verses, halfhumorous
halfsentimental, a kind of lamentation of Jeremiah,
written fifteen years ago. Its title (*Credidimus Jovem*
regnare, we *used* to think God reigned) sufficiently
explains it as an expansion of the Vendean (or was

it Breton?) war cry of the French Revolution—
*Rendez-nous Notre Dieu!*¹ They won't, for they can't,
but I owe 'em a grudge all the same. There are a
half-dozen lines in it you may like" (Lowell to Mrs
Owen Jones Wister, "Xmas, 1886," *New Letters of*
James Russell Lowell, p. 301)

Lowell's later poems, which have never attracted
wide attention, seem to the present editor better
than the earlier poems, they are more mature and
more individual.

O days endeared to every Muse,
When nobody had any Views,
Nor, while the cloudscape of his mind
By every breeze was new designed,
Insisted all the world should see 15
Camels or whales where none there be!
O happy days, when men received
From sire to son what all believed,
And left the other world in bliss,
Too busy with bedevilling this! 20

Beset by doubts of every breed
In the last bastion of my creed,
With shot and shell for Sabbath-chime,
I watch the storming-party climb,
Panting (their prey in easy reach),
To pour triumphant through the breach
In walls that shed like snowflakes tons
Of missiles from old-fashioned guns,
But crumble 'neath the storm that pours 30
All day and night from bigger bores,
There, as I hopeless watch and wait
The last life-crushing coil of Fate,
Despair finds solace in the praise
Of those serene dawn-rosy days 35
Ere microscopes had made us heirs
To large estates of doubts and snares,
By proving that the title-deeds,
Once all-sufficient for men's needs,
Are palimpsests that scarce disguise 40
The tracings of still earlier lies,
Themselves as surely written o'er
An older fib erased before.

So from these days I fly to those 45
That in the landlocked Past repose,
Where no rude wind of doctrine shakes
From bloom-flushed boughs untimely flakes;
Where morning's eyes see nothing strange,
No crude perplexity of change, 50

¹ Give us back our God.

And morrows trip along their ways
 Secure as happy yesterdays.
 Then there were rulers who could trace
 Through heroes up to gods their race,
 Pledged to fair fame and noble use
 By veins from Odin filled or Zeus,
 And under bonds to keep divine
 The praise of a celestial line.
 Then priests could pile the altar's sods,
 With whom gods spake as they with gods,
 And everywhere from haunted earth
 Broke springs of wonder, that had birth
 In depths divine beyond the ken
 And fatal scrutiny of men;
 Then hulls and groves and streams and seas
 Thrilled with immortal presences,
 Not too ethereal for the scope
 Of human passion's dream or hope.

Now Pan at last is surely dead,
 And King No-Credit reigns instead,
 Whose officers, morosely strict,
 Poor Fancy's tenantry evict,
 Chase the last Genius from the door,
 And nothing dances any more.
 Nothing? Ah, yes, our tables do,
 Drumming the Old One's own tattoo,
 And, if the oracles are dumb,
 Have we not mediums? Why be glum?

Fly thither? Why, the very air
 Is full of hindrance and despair!
 Fly thither? But I cannot fly;
 My doubts enmesh me if I try,—
 Each lilliputian, but, combined,
 Potent a giant's limbs to bind.
 This world and that are growing dark;
 A huge interrogation mark,
 The Devil's crook episcopal,
 Still borne before him since the Fall,
 Blackens with its ill-omened sign
 The old blue heaven of faith benign.
 Whence? Whither? Wherefore? How? Which?
 Why?

All ask at once, all wait reply.
 Men feel old systems cracking under 'em;
 Life saddens to a mere conundrum
 Which once Religion solved, but she
 Has lost—has Science found?—the key.

What was snow-bearded Odin, trow,
 The mighty hunter long ago,

Whose horn and hounds the peasant hears
 Still when the Northlights shake their spears?
 Science hath answers twain, I've heard;
 Choose which you will, nor hope a third;
 5 Whichever box the truth be stowed in,
 There's not a sliver left of Odin.
 Either he was a pinchbrowed thing,
 With scarcely wit a stone to fling,
 A creature both in size and shape
 10 Nearer than we are to the ape,
 Who hung sublime with brat and spouse
 By tail prehensile from the boughs,
 And, happier than his maimed descendants,
 The culture-curtailed independents,
 15 Could pluck his cherries with both paws,
 And stuff with both his big-boned jaws;
 Or else the core his name enveloped
 Was from a solar myth developed,
 Which, hunted to its primal shoot,
 20 Takes refuge in a Sanskrit root,
 Thereby to instant death explaining
 The little poetry remaining.
 Try it with Zeus, 'tis just the same;
 The thing evades, we hug a name;
 25 Nay, scarcely that,—perhaps a vapor
 Born of some atmospheric caper.
 All Lempriere's fables blur together
 In cloudy symbols of the weather,
 And Aphrodite rose from frothy seas
 30 But to illustrate such hypotheses.
 With years enough behind his back,
 Lincoln will take the selfsame track,
 And prove, hulled fairly to the cob,
 A mere vagary of Old Prob.
 35 Give the right man a solar myth,
 And he'll confute the sun therewith.

They make things admirably plain,
 But one hard question *will* remain:
 40 If one hypothesis you lose,
 Another in its place you choose,
 But, your faith gone, O man and brother,
 Whose shop shall furnish you another?
 One that will wash, I mean, and wear,
 45 And wrap us warmly from despair?
 While they are clearing up our puzzles,
 And clapping prophylactic muzzles
 On the Actæon's² hounds that sniff
 Our devious track through But and If,
 50 Would they'd explain away the Devil

² In Greek mythology a hunter who is devoured by his own dogs.

And other facts that won't keep level,
 But rise beneath our feet or fail,
 A reeling ship's deck in a gale!
 God vanished long ago, *iwis*,
 A mere subjective synthesis;
 A doll, stuffed out with hopes and fears,
 Too homely for us pretty dears,
 Who want one that conviction carries,
 Last make of London or of Paris.
 He gone, I felt a moment's spasm,
 But calmed myself with Protoplasm,
 A finer name, and, what is more,
 As enigmatic as before;
 Greek, too, and sure to fill with ease
 Minds caught in the Symplegades³
 Of soul and sense, life's two conditions,
 Each baffled with its own omniscience.
 The men who labor to revise
 Our Bibles will, I hope, be wise,
 And print it without foolish qualms
 Instead of God in David's psalms:
 Noll had been more effective far
 Could he have shouted at Dunbar,
 "Rise, Protoplasm!" No dourest Scot
 Had waited for another shot.

And yet I frankly must confess
 A secret unforgivingness,
 And shudder at the saving chrism
 Whose best New Birth is Pessimism;
 My soul—I mean the bit of phosphorus,
 That fills the place of what that was for us—
 Can't bid its inward bores defiance
 With the new nursery-tales of science.
 What profits me, though doubt by doubt,
 As nail by nail, be driven out,
 When every new one, like the last,
 Still holds my coffin-lid as fast?
 Would I find thought a moment's truce,
 Give me the young world's Mother Goose
 With life and joy in every limb,
 The chimney-corner tales of Grimm!

Our dear and admirable Huxley⁴
 Cannot explain to me why ducks lay,
 Or, rather, how into their eggs

Blunder potential wings and legs
 With will to move them and decide
 Whether in air or lymph to glide
 Who gets a hair's-breadth on by showing
 5 That Something Else set all agoing?
 Farther and farther back we push
 From Moses and his burning bush;
 Cry, "Art Thou there?" Above, below,
 All Nature mutters *yes* and *no*!
 10 'Tis the old answer: we're agreed
 Being from Being must proceed,
 Life be Life's source. I might as well
 Obey the meeting-house's bell,
 And listen while Old Hundred pours
 15 Forth through the summer-opened doors,
 From old and young. I hear it yet,
 Swelled by bass-viol and clarinet,
 While the gray minister, with face
 Radiant, let loose his noble bass.
 20 If Heaven it reached not, yet its roll
 Waked all the echoes of the soul,
 And in it many a life found wings
 To soar away from sordid things.
 Church gone and singers too, the song
 25 Sings to me voiceless all night long,
 Till my soul beckons me afar,
 Glowing and trembling like a star.
 Will any scientific touch
 With my worn strings achieve as much?
 30 I don't object, not I, to know
 My sires were monkeys, if 'twas so;
 I touch my ear's collusive tip
 And own the poor-relationship.
 35 That apes of various shapes and sizes
 Contained their germs that all the prizes
 Of senate, pulpit, camp, and bar win
 May give us hopes that sweeten Darwin.
 Who knows but from our loins may spring
 40 (Long hence) some winged sweet-throated thing
 As much superior to us
 As we to Cynocephalus?⁵

This is consoling, but, alas,
 45 It wipes no dimness from the glass
 Where I am flattening my poor nose,
 In hope to see beyond my toes.
 Though I accept my pedigree,
 Yet where, pray tell me, is the key
 50 That should unlock a private door
 To the Great Mystery, such no more?

⁵ A Greek word meaning with a head like a dog's.

³ Two rocky islands at the entrance to the Euxine Sea, supposed to be dangerous to ships.

⁴ Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895), English scientist and champion of the Darwinian theory of evolution, which seemed to Lowell and many others to make it increasingly difficult to believe in a God.

Each offers his, but one nor all
 Are much persuasive with the wall
 That rises now, as long ago,
 Between I wonder and I know,
 Nor will vouchsafe a pin-hole peep
 At the veiled Isis in its keep.
 Where is no door, I but produce
 My key to find it of no use.
 Yet better keep it, after all,
 Since Nature's economical,
 And who can tell but some fine day
 (If it occur to her) she may,
 In her good-will to you and me,
Make door and lock to match the key?

"FRANCISCUS DE VERULAMIO
 SIC COGITAVIT"¹

(1888)

That's a rather bold speech, my Lord Bacon,
 For, indeed, is 't so easy to know
 Just how much we from others have taken,
 And how much our own natural flow?

Since your mind bubbled up at its fountain,
 How many streams made it elate,
 While it calmed to the plain from the mountain,
 As every mind must that grows great?

While you thought 'twas You thinking as newly
 As Adam still wet with God's dew,
 You forgot in your self-pride that truly
 The whole Past was thinking through you.

Greece, Rome, nay, your namesake, old Roger,
 With Truth's nameless delvers who wrought
 In the dark mines of Truth, helped to prod your
 Fine brain with the goad of their thought.

As mummy was prized for a rich hue
 The painter no elsewhere could find,
 So 'twas buried men's thinking with which you
 Gave the ripe mellow tone to your mind.

I heard the proud strawberry saying,
 "Only look what a ruby I've made!"
 It forgot how the bees in their maying
 Had brought it the stuff for its trade.

¹ "Francis of Verulam thought thus." Francis Bacon was Baron Verulam.

And yet there's the half of a truth in it,
 And my Lord might his copyright sue,
 For a thought's his who kindles new youth in it,
 Or so puts it as makes it more true.

The birds but repeat without ending
 The same old traditional notes,
 Which some, by more happily blending,
 Seem to make over new in their throats;

And we men through our old bit of song run,
 Until one just improves on the rest,
 And we call a thing his, in the long run,
 Who utters it clearest and best.

AUSPEX¹

(1888)

My heart, I cannot still it,
 Nest that had song-birds in it;
 And when the last shall go,
 The dreary days, to fill it,
 Instead of lark or linnet,
 Shall whirl dead leaves and snow.

Had they been swallows only,
 Without the passion stronger
 That skyward longs and sings,—
 Woe's me, I shall be lonely
 When I can feel no longer
 The impatience of their wings!

A moment, sweet delusion,
 Like birds the brown leaves hover,
 But it will not be long
 Before the wild confusion
 Fall wavering down to cover
 The poet and his song.

PESSIMOPTIMISM

(1888)

Ye little think what toil it was to build
 A world of men imperfect even as this,
 Where we conceive of Good by what we miss,
 Of Ill by that wherewith best days are filled;
 A world whose every atom is self-willed,
 Whose corner-stone is propt on artifice,

¹ The Latin word means augur; bird-seer.

Whose joy is shorter-lived than woman's kiss,
Whose wisdom hoarded is but to be spilled.
Yet this is better than a life of caves,
Whose highest art was scratching on a bone,
Or chipping toilsome arrowheads of flint;
Better, though doomed to hear while Cleon
 raves,
To see wit's want eterned in paint or stone,
And wade the drain-drenched shoals of daily
 print.

THE BOSS

(1888)

Skilled to pull wires, he baffles Nature's hope, 15
Who sure intended him to stretch a rope.

MONNA LISA

(1888)

She gave me all that woman can,
Nor her soul's nunnery forego,
A confidence that man to man
Without remorse can never show.

Rare art, that can the sense refine
Till not a pulse rebellious stirs,
And, since she never can be mine,
Makes it seem sweeter to be hers!

THE SECRET

(1888)

I have a fancy: how shall I bring it
Home to all mortals wherever they be?
Say it or sing it? Shoe it or wing it,
So it may outrun or outfly Me,
Merest cocoon-web whence it broke free?

Only one secret can save from disaster,
Only one magic is that of the Master:
Set it to music; give it a tune,—
Tune the brook sings you, tune the breeze
 brings you,
Tune the wild columbines nod to in June!

This is the secret: so simple, you see!
Easy as loving, easy as kissing,
Easy as—well, let me ponder—as missing,
Known, since the world was, by scarce two or
 three.

DEMOCRACY

(1884; 1886)

This address—published in Lowell's *Democracy and Other Addresses* (1886)—was his inaugural address when he assumed the presidency of the Birmingham and Midland Institute, October 6, 1884. It took courage as well as tact to speak acceptably on democracy to an audience in England, where the upper classes were in general hostile to democracy and afraid that the American example would be followed in their own country. He was shrewd enough to point out that American democracy had its roots in seventeenth-century English liberalism. For Lowell's criticisms of the workings of American democracy, one must turn to his New York address, "The Place of the Independent in Politics" (1888), in which he said:

"Four years ago I was called upon to deliver an address in Birmingham, and chose for my theme 'Democracy.' In that place I felt it incumbent on me to dwell on the good points and favorable aspects of democracy as I had seen them practically illustrated in my native land. I chose rather that my discourse should suffer through inadequacy than run the risk of seeming to forget what Burke calls 'that salutary prejudice called our country,' and that obligation which forbids one to discuss family affairs before strangers."

"An address," wrote Lowell to Henry James, November 30, 1886, "is a species by itself—a cross between an essay and speech—tolerating, even inviting, more rhetoric than the one, less logic than the other and suggesting the touch of humour here and there that shall relieve without relaxing the attention of an audience."

He must be a born leader or misleader of men, or must have been sent into the world unfurnished with that modulating and restraining balance-wheel which we call a sense of humor, who, in old age, has as strong a confidence in his opinions and in the necessity of bringing the universe into conformity with them as he had in youth. In a world the very condition of whose being is that it should be in perpetual flux, where all seems mirage, and the one abiding thing is the effort to distinguish realities from appearances, the elderly man must be indeed of a singularly tough and valid fibre who is certain that he has any clarified residuum of experience, any assured verdict of reflection, that deserves to be called an opinion, or who, even if he had, feels that he is justified in holding mankind by the button while he is expound-

ing it. And in a world of daily—nay, almost hourly—journalism, where every clever man, every man who thinks himself clever, or whom anybody else thinks clever, is called upon to deliver his judgment point-blank and at the word of command on every conceivable subject of human thought, or, on what sometimes seems to him very much the same thing, on every inconceivable display of human want of thought, there is such a spendthrift waste of all those commonplaces which furnish the permitted staple of public discourse that there is little chance of beguiling a new tune out of the one-stringed instrument on which we have been thrumming so long. In this desperate necessity one is often tempted to think that, if all the words of the dictionary were tumbled down in a heap and then all those fortuitous juxtapositions and combinations that made tolerable sense were picked out and pieced together, we might find among them some poignant suggestions towards novelty of thought or expression. But, alas! it is only the great poets who seem to have this unsolicited profusion of unexpected and incalculable phrase, this infinite variety of topic. For everybody else everything has been said before, and said over again after. He who has read his Aristotle will be apt to think that observation has on most points of general applicability said its last word, and he who has mounted the tower of Plato to look abroad from it will never hope to climb another with so lofty a vantage of speculation. Where it is so simple if not so easy a thing to hold one's peace, why add to the general confusion of tongues? There is something disheartening, too, in being expected to fill up not less than a certain measure of time, as if the mind were an hour-glass, that need only be shaken and set on one end or the other, as the case may be, to run its allotted sixty minutes with decorous exactitude. I recollect being once told by the late eminent naturalist, Agassiz, that when he was to deliver his first lecture as professor (at Zürich, I believe) he had grave doubts of his ability to occupy the prescribed three quarters of an hour. He was speaking without notes, and glancing anxiously from time to time at the watch that lay before him on the desk. "When I had spoken a half hour," he said, "I had told them everything I knew in the world, everything! Then I began to repeat myself," he added, roguishly,

"and I have done nothing else ever since." Beneath the humorous exaggeration of the story I seemed to see the face of a very serious and improving moral. And yet if one were to say only what he had to say and then stopped, his audience would feel defrauded of their honest measure. Let us take courage by the example of the French, whose exportation of Bordeaux wines increases as the area of their land in vineyards is diminished.

To me, somewhat hopelessly revolving these things, the undelayable year has rolled round, and I find myself called upon to say something in this place, where so many wiser men have spoken before me. Precluded, in my quality of national guest, by motives of taste and discretion, from dealing with any question of immediate and domestic concern, it seemed to me wisest, or at any rate most prudent, to choose a topic of comparatively abstract interest, and to ask your indulgence for a few somewhat generalized remarks on a matter concerning which I had some experimental knowledge, derived from the use of such eyes and ears as Nature had been pleased to endow me withal, and such report as I had been able to win from them. The subject which most readily suggested itself was the spirit and the working of those conceptions of life and polity which are lumped together, whether for reproach or commendation, under the name of Democracy. By temperament and education of a conservative turn, I saw the last years of that quaint Arcadia which French travellers saw with delighted amazement a century ago, and have watched the change (to me a sad one) from an agricultural to a proletary population. The testimony of Balaam should carry some conviction. I have grown to manhood and am now growing old with the growth of this system of government in my native land, have watched its advances, or what some would call its encroachments, gradual and irresistible as those of a glacier, have been an ear-witness to the forebodings of wise and good and timid men, and have lived to see those forebodings belied by the course of events, which is apt to show itself humorously careless of the reputation of prophets. I recollect hearing a sagacious old gentleman say in 1840 that the doing away with the property qualification for suffrage twenty years before had been the ruin of the State of Massachusetts; that it had put public

credit and private estate alike at the mercy of demagogues. I lived to see that Commonwealth twenty odd years later paying the interest on her bonds in gold, though it cost her sometimes nearly three for one to keep her faith, and that while suffering an unparalleled drain of men and treasure in helping to sustain the unity and self-respect of the nation.

If universal suffrage has worked ill in our larger cities, as it certainly has, this has been mainly because the hands that wielded it were untrained to its use. There the election of a majority of the trustees of the public money is controlled by the most ignorant and vicious of a population which has come to us from abroad, wholly unpracticed in self-government and incapable of assimilation by American habits and methods. But the finances of our towns, where the native tradition is still dominant and whose affairs are discussed and settled in a public assembly of the people, have been in general honestly and prudently administered. Even in manufacturing towns, where a majority of the voters live by their daily wages, it is not so often the recklessness as the moderation of public expenditure that surprises an old-fashioned observer. "The beggar is in the saddle at last," cries Proverbial Wisdom. "Why, in the name of all former experience, doesn't he ride to the Devil?" Because in the very act of mounting he ceased to be a beggar and became part owner of the piece of property he bestrides. The last thing we need be anxious about is property. It always has friends or the means of making them. If riches have wings to fly away from their owner, they have wings also to escape danger.

I hear America sometimes playfully accused of sending you all your storms, and am in the habit of parrying the charge by alleging that we are enabled to do this because, in virtue of our protective system, we can afford to make better bad weather than anybody else. And what wiser use could we make of it than to export it in return for the paupers which some European countries are good enough to send over to us who have not attained to the same skill in the manufacture of them? But bad weather is not the worst thing that is laid at our door. A French gentleman, not long ago, forgetting Burke's monition of how unwise it is to draw an indictment against a whole people, has charged us

with the responsibility of whatever he finds disagreeable in the morals and manners of his countrymen. If M. Zola or some other competent witness would only go into the box and tell us what those morals and manners were before our example corrupted them! But I confess that I find little to interest and less to edify me in these international bandyings of "You're another."

I shall address myself to a single point only in the long list of offences of which we are more or less gravely accused, because that really includes all the rest. It is that we are infecting the Old World with what seems to be thought the entirely new disease of Democracy. It is generally people who are in what are called easy circumstances who can afford the leisure to treat themselves to a handsome complaint, and these experience an immediate alleviation when once they have found a sonorous Greek name to abuse it by. There is something consolatory also, something flattering to their sense of personal dignity, and to that conceit of singularity which is the natural recoil from our uneasy consciousness of being commonplace, in thinking ourselves victims of a malady by which no one had ever suffered before. Accordingly they find it simpler to class under one comprehensive heading whatever they find offensive to their nerves, their tastes, their interests, or what they suppose to be their opinions, and christen it Democracy, much as physicians label every obscure disease gout, or as cross-grained fellows lay their ill-temper to the weather. But is it really a new ailment, and, if it be, is America answerable for it? Even if she were, would it account for the phylloxera, and hoof-and-mouth disease, and bad harvests, and bad English, and the German bands, and the Boers, and all the other discomforts with which these later days have vexed the souls of them that go in chariots? Yet I have seen the evil example of Democracy in America cited as the source and origin of things quite as heterogeneous and quite as little connected with it by any sequence of cause and effect. Surely this ferment is nothing new. It has been at work for centuries, and we are more conscious of it only because in this age of publicity, where the newspapers offer a rostrum to whoever has a grievance, or fancies that he has, the bubbles and scum thrown up by it are more noticeable on the surface than in those dumb

ages when there was a cover of silence and suppression on the cauldron. Bernardo Navagero, speaking of the Provinces of Lower Austria in 1546, tells us that "in them there are five sorts of persons, Clergy, Barons, Nobles, Burghers, and Peasants. Of these last no account is made, *because they have no voice in the Diet.*"¹

Nor was it among the people that subversive or mistaken doctrines had their rise. A Father of the Church said that property was theft many centuries before Proudhon² was born. Bourdaloue reaffirmed it. Montesquieu was the inventor of national workshops, and of the theory that the State owed every man a living. Nay, was not the Church herself the first organized Democracy? A few centuries ago the chief end of man was to keep his soul alive, and then the little kernel of heaven that sets the gases at work was religious, and produced the Reformation. Even in that, far-sighted persons like the Emperor Charles V. saw the germ of political and social revolution. Now that the chief end of man seems to have become the keeping of the body alive, and as comfortably alive as possible, the heaven also has become wholly political and social. But there had also been social upheavals before the Reformation and contemporaneously with it, especially among men of Teutonic race. The Reformation gave outlet and direction to an unrest already existing. Formerly the immense majority of men—our brothers—knew only their sufferings, their wants, and their desires. They are beginning now to know their opportunity and their power. All persons who see deeper than their plates are rather inclined to thank God for it than to bewail it, for the sores of Lazarus have a poison in them against which Dives has no antidote.

There can be no doubt that the spectacle of a great and prosperous Democracy on the other

¹ Below the Peasants it should be remembered, was still another even more helpless class, the servile farm-laborers. The same witness informs us that of the extraordinary imposts the Peasants paid nearly twice as much in proportion to their estimated property as the Barons, Nobles, and Burghers together. Moreover, the upper classes were assessed at their own valuation, while they arbitrarily fixed that of the Peasants, who had no voice. (*Relazioni degli Ambasciatori Veneti*, Serie I., tomo i., pp. 378, 379, 389.) (Author's note.)

² Pierre Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865), a French socialist, who is supposed to have said, "Property is theft."

side of the Atlantic must react powerfully on the aspirations and political theories of men in the Old World who do not find things to their mind; but, whether for good or evil, it should not be overlooked that the acorn from which it sprang was ripened on the British oak. Every successive swarm that has gone out from this *officina gentium*³ has, when left to its own instincts—may I not call them hereditary instincts?—assumed a more or less thoroughly democratic form. This would seem to show, what I believe to be the fact, that the British Constitution, under whatever disguises of prudence or decorum, is essentially democratic. England, indeed, may be called a monarchy with democratic tendencies, the United States a democracy with conservative instincts. People are continually saying that America is in the air, and I am glad to think it is, since this means only that a clearer conception of human claims and human duties is beginning to be prevalent. The discontent with the existing order of things, however, pervaded the atmosphere wherever the conditions were favorable, long before Columbus, seeking the back door of Asia, found himself knocking at the front door of America. I say wherever the conditions were favorable, for it is certain that the germs of disease do not stick or find a prosperous field for their development and noxious activity unless where the simplest sanitary precautions have been neglected. "For this effect defective comes by cause," as Polonius said long ago. It is only by instigation of the wrongs of men that what are called the Rights of Man become turbulent and dangerous. It is then only that they syllogize unwelcome truths. It is not the insurrections of ignorance that are dangerous, but the revolts of intelligence:—

*The wicked and the weak rebel in vain,
Slaves by their own compulsion*

Had the governing classes in France during the last century paid as much heed to their proper business as to their pleasures or manners, the guillotine need never have severed that spinal marrow of orderly and secular tradition through which in a normally constituted state the brain sympathizes with the extremities and sends will and impulsion thither. It is only when the reasonable and practicable are denied that men demand the unreasonable and impracticable;

³ Workshop of nations.

only when the possible is made difficult that they fancy the impossible to be easy. Fairy tales are made out of the dreams of the poor. No, the sentiment which lies at the root of democracy is nothing new. I am speaking always of a sentiment, a spirit, and not of a form of government; for this was but the outgrowth of the other and not its cause. This sentiment is merely an expression of the natural wish of people to have a hand, if need be a controlling hand, in the management of their own affairs. What is new is that they are more and more gaining that control, and learning more and more how to be worthy of it. What we used to call the tendency or drift—what we are being taught to call more wisely the evolution of things—has for some time been setting steadily in this direction. There is no good in arguing with the inevitable. The only argument available with an east wind is to put on your overcoat. And in this case, also, the prudent will prepare themselves to encounter what they cannot prevent. Some people advise us to put on the brakes, as if the movement of which we are conscious were that of a railway train running down an incline. But a metaphor is no argument, though it be sometimes the gunpowder to drive one home and imbed it in the memory. Our disquiet comes of what nurses and other experienced persons call growing-pains, and need not seriously alarm us. They are what every generation before us—certainly every generation since the invention of printing—has gone through with more or less good fortune. To the door of every generation there comes a knocking, and unless the household, like the Thane of Cawdor and his wife, have been doing some deed without a name, they need not shudder. It turns out at worst to be a poor relation who wishes to come in out of the cold. The porter always grumbles and is slow to open. “Who’s there, in the name of Beelzebub?” he mutters. Not a change for the better in our human housekeeping has ever taken place that wise and good men have not opposed it,—have not prophesied with the alderman that the world would wake up to find its throat cut in consequence of it. The world, on the contrary, wakes up, rubs its eyes, yawns, stretches itself, and goes about its business as if nothing had happened. Suppression of the slave trade, abolition of slavery, trade unions,—at all of these excellent people shook their heads

despondingly, and murmured “Ichabod.” But the trade unions are now debating instead of conspiring, and we all read their discussions with comfort and hope, sure that they are learning the business of citizenship and the difficulties of practical legislation.

One of the most curious of these frenzies of exclusion was that against the emancipation of the Jews. All share in the government of the world was denied for centuries to perhaps the ablest, certainly the most tenacious, race that had ever lived in it—the race to whom we owed our religion and the purest spiritual stimulus and consolation to be found in all literature—a race in which ability seems as natural and hereditary as the curve of their noses, and whose blood, furtively mingling with the bluest bloods in Europe, has quickened them with its own indomitable impulsion. We drove them into a corner, but they had their revenge, as the wronged are always sure to have it sooner or later. They made their corner the counter and banking-house of the world, and thence they rule it and us with the ignobler sceptre of finance. Your grandfathers mobbed Priestley only that you might set up his statue and make Birmingham the headquarters of English Unitarianism. We hear it said sometimes that this is an age of transition, as if that made matters clearer; but can any one point us to an age that was not? If he could, he would show us an age of stagnation. The question for us, as it has been for all before us, is to make the transition gradual and easy, to see that our points are right so that the train may not come to grief. For we should remember that nothing is more natural for people whose education has been neglected than to spell evolution with an initial “r.” A great man struggling with the storms of fate has been called a sublime spectacle; but surely a great man wrestling with these new forces that have come into the world, mastering them and controlling them to beneficent ends, would be a yet sublimer. Here is not a danger, and if there were it would be only a better school of manhood, a nobler scope for ambition. I have hinted that what people are afraid of in democracy is less the thing itself than what they conceive to be its necessary adjuncts and consequences. It is supposed to reduce all mankind to a dead level of mediocrity in character and culture, to vulgarize men’s conceptions of life, and there-

fore their code of morals, manners, and conduct—to endanger the rights of property and possession. But I believe that the real gravamen of the charges lies in the habit it has of making itself generally disagreeable by asking the Powers that Be at the most inconvenient moment whether they are the powers that ought to be. If the powers that be are in a condition to give a satisfactory answer to this inevitable question, they need feel in no way discomfited by it.

Few people take the trouble of trying to find out what democracy really is. Yet this would be a great help, for it is our lawless and uncertain thoughts, it is the indefiniteness of our impressions, that fill darkness, whether mental or physical, with spectres and hobgoblins. Democracy is nothing more than an experiment in government, more likely to succeed in a new soil, but likely to be tried in all soils, which must stand or fall on its own merits as others have done before it. For there is no trick of perpetual motion in politics any more than in mechanics. President Lincoln defined democracy to be "the government of the people by the people for the people." This is a sufficiently compact statement of it as a political arrangement. Theodore Parker said that "Democracy meant not 'I'm as good as you are,' but 'You're as good as I am.' " And this is the ethical conception of it, necessary as a complement of the other; a conception which, could it be made actual and practical, would easily solve all the riddles that the old sphinx of political and social economy who sits by the roadside has been proposing to mankind from the beginning, and which mankind have shown such a singular talent for answering wrongly. In this sense Christ was the first true democrat that ever breathed, as the old dramatist Dekker said he was the first true gentleman. The characters may be easily doubled, so strong is the likeness between them. A beautiful and profound parable of the Persian poet Jellaladeen tells us that "One knocked at the Beloved's door, and a voice asked from within 'Who is there?' and he answered 'It is I.' Then the voice said, 'This house will not hold me and thee;' and the door was not opened. Then went the lover into the desert and fasted and prayed in solitude, and after a year he returned and knocked again at the door; and again the voice asked 'Who is there?' and he said 'It is thyself;' and the door

was opened to him." But that is idealism, you will say, and this is an only too practical world I grant it; but I am one of those who believe that the real will never find an irremovable basis till it rests on the ideal. It used to be thought that a democracy was possible only in a small territory, and this is doubtless true of a democracy strictly defined, for in such all the citizens decide directly upon every question of public concern in a general assembly. An example still survives in the tiny Swiss canton of Appenzell. But this immediate intervention of the people in their own affairs is not of the essence of democracy, it is not necessary, nor indeed, in most cases, practicable. Democracies to which Mr. Lincoln's definition would fairly enough apply have existed, and now exist, in which, though the supreme authority reside in the people, yet they can act only indirectly on the national policy. This generation has seen a democracy with an imperial figurehead, and in all that have ever existed the body politic has never embraced all the inhabitants included within its territory, the right to share in the direction of affairs has been confined to citizens, and citizenship has been further restricted by various limitations, sometimes of property, sometimes of nativity, and always of age and sex.

The framers of the American Constitution were far from wishing or intending to found a democracy in the strict sense of the word, though, as was inevitable, every expansion of the scheme of government they elaborated has been in a democratical direction. But this has been generally the slow result of growth, and not the sudden innovation of theory; in fact, they had a profound disbelief in theory, and knew better than to commit the folly of breaking with the past. They were not seduced by the French fallacy that a new system of government could be ordered like a new suit of clothes. They would as soon have thought of ordering a new suit of flesh and skin. It is only on the roaring loom of time that the stuff is woven for such a venture of their thought and experience as they were meditating. They recognized fully the value of tradition and habit as the great allies of permanence and stability. They all had that distaste for innovation which belonged to their race, and many of them a distrust of human nature derived from their creed. The day of sentiment was over, and no dithyrambic affirma-

tions or fine-drawn analyses of the Rights of Man would serve their present turn. This was a practical question, and they addressed themselves to it as men of knowledge and judgment should. Their problem was how to adapt English principles and precedents to the new conditions of American life, and they solved it with singular discretion. They put as many obstacles as they could contrive, not in the way of the people's will, but of their whim. With few exceptions they probably admitted the logic of the then accepted syllogism,—democracy, anarchy, despotism. But this formula was framed upon the experience of small cities shut up to stew within their narrow walls, where the number of citizens made but an inconsiderable fraction of the inhabitants, where every passion was reverberated from house to house and from man to man with gathering rumor till every impulse became gregarious and therefore inconsiderate, and every popular assembly needed but an infusion of eloquent sophistry to turn it into a mob, all the more dangerous because sanctified with the formality of law.⁴

Fortunately their case was wholly different. They were to legislate for a widely scattered population and for States already practised in the discipline of a partial independence. They had an unequalled opportunity and enormous advantages. The material they had to work upon was already democratical by instincts and habitude. It was tempered to their hands by more than a century's schooling in self-government. They had but to give permanent and conservative form to a ductile mass. In giving impulse and direction to their new institutions, especially in supplying them with checks and balances, they had a great help and safeguard in their federal organization. The different, sometimes conflicting, interests and social systems of the several States made existence as a Union and coalescence into a nation conditional on a constant practice of moderation and compromise. The very elements of disintegration were the best guides in political training. Their children learned the lesson of compromise only too well, and it was the application

of it to a question of fundamental morals that cost us our civil war. We learned once for all that compromise makes a good umbrella but a poor roof, that it is a temporary expedient, often wise in party politics, almost sure to be unwise in statesmanship.

Has not the trial of democracy in America proved, on the whole, successful? If it had not, would the Old World be vexed with any fears of its proving contagious? This trial would have been less severe could it have been made with a people homogeneous in race, language, and traditions, whereas the United States have been called on to absorb and assimilate enormous masses of foreign population, heterogeneous in all these respects, and drawn mainly from that class which might fairly say that the world was not their friend, nor the world's law. The previous condition too often justified the traditional Irishman, who, landing in New York and asked what his politics were, inquired if there was a Government there, and on being told that there was, retorted, "Thin I'm agin it!" We have taken from Europe the poorest, the most ignorant, the most turbulent of her people, and have made them over into good citizens, who have added to our wealth, and who are ready to die in defence of a country and of institutions which they know to be worth dying for. The exceptions have been (and they are lamentable exceptions) where these hordes of ignorance and poverty have coagulated in great cities. But the social system is yet to seek which has not to look the same terrible wolf in the eyes. On the other hand, at this very moment Irish peasants are buying up the wornout farms of Massachusetts, and making them productive again by the same virtues of industry and thrift that once made them profitable to the English ancestors of the men who are deserting them. To have achieved even these prosaic results (if you choose to call them so), and that out of materials the most discordant,—I might say the most recalcitrant,—argues a certain beneficent virtue in the system that could do it, and is not to be accounted for by mere luck. Carlyle said scornfully that America meant only roast turkey every day for everybody. He forgot that States, as Bacon said of wars, go on their bellies. As for the security of property, it should be tolerably well secured in a country where every other man hopes to be rich, even though the only property qualifica-

⁴ The effect of the electric telegraph in reproducing this trooping of emotion and perhaps of opinion is yet to be measured. The effect of Darwinism as a disintegrator of humanitarianism is also to be reckoned with. (Author's note.)

tion be the ownership of two hands that add to the general wealth. Is it not the best security for anything to interest the largest possible number of persons in its preservation and the smallest in its division? In point of fact, far-seeing men count the increasing power of wealth and its combinations as one of the chief dangers with which the institutions of the United States are threatened in the not distant future. The right of individual property is no doubt the very corner-stone of civilization as hitherto understood, but I am a little impatient of being told that property is entitled to exceptional consideration because it bears all burdens of the State. It bears those, indeed, which can most easily be borne, but poverty pays with its person the chief expenses of war, pestilence, and famine. Wealth should not forget this, for poverty is beginning to think of it now and then. Let me not be misunderstood. I see as clearly as any man possibly can, and rate as highly, the value of wealth, and of hereditary wealth, as the security of refinement, the feeder of all those arts that ennoble and beautify life, and as making a country worth living in. Many an ancestral hall here in England has been a nursery of that culture which has been of example and benefit to all. Old gold has a civilizing virtue which new gold must grow old to be capable of secreting.

I should not think of coming before you to defend or to criticise any form of government. All have their virtues, all their defects, and all have illustrated one period or another in the history of the race, with signal services to humanity and culture. There is not one that could stand a cynical cross-examination by an experienced criminal lawyer, except that of a perfectly wise and perfectly good despot, such as the world has never seen, except in that white-haired king of Browning's, who

*Lived long ago
In the morning of the world,
When Earth was nearer Heaven than now.*

The English race, if they did not invent government by discussion, have at least carried it nearest to perfection in practice. It seems a very safe and reasonable contrivance for occupying the attention of the country, and is certainly a better way of settling questions than by push of pike. Yet, if one should ask it why it should not rather be called government by gabble, it

would have to fumble in its pocket a good while before it found the change for a convincing reply. As matters stand, too, it is beginning to be doubtful whether Parliament and Congress sit at Westminster and Washington or in the editors' rooms of the leading journals, so thoroughly is everything debated before the authorized and responsible debaters get on their legs. And what shall we say of government by a majority of voices? To a person who in the last century would have called himself an Impartial Observer, a numerical preponderance seems, on the whole, as clumsy a way of arriving at truth as could well be devised, but experience has apparently shown it to be a convenient arrangement for determining what may be expedient or advisable or practicable at any given moment. Truth, after all, wears a different face to everybody, and it would be too tedious to wait till all were agreed. She is said to lie at the bottom of a well, for the very reason, perhaps, that whoever looks down in search of her sees his own image at the bottom, and is persuaded not only that he has seen the goddess, but that she is far better-looking than he had imagined.

The arguments against universal suffrage are equally unanswerable. "What," we exclaim, "shall Tom, Dick, and Harry have as much weight in the scale as I?" Of course, nothing could be more absurd. And yet universal suffrage has not been the instrument of greater unwisdom than contrivances of a more select description. Assemblies could be mentioned composed entirely of Masters of Arts and Doctors in Divinity which have sometimes shown traces of human passion or prejudice in their votes. Have the Serene Highnesses and Enlightened Classes carried on the business of Mankind so well, then, that there is no use in trying a less costly method? The democratic theory is that those Constitutions are likely to prove steadiest which have the broadest base, that the right to vote makes a safety-valve of every voter, and that the best way of teaching a man how to vote is to give him the chance of practice. For the question is no longer the academic one, "Is it wise to give every man the ballot?" but rather the practical one, "Is it prudent to deprive whole classes of it any longer?" It may be conjectured that it is cheaper in the long run to lift men up than to hold them down, and that the ballot in their hands is less dangerous to society than a

sense of wrong in their heads. At any rate this is the dilemma to which the drift of opinion has been for some time sweeping us, and in politics a dilemma is a more unmanageable thing to hold by the horns than a wolf by the ears. It is said that the right of suffrage is not valued when it is indiscriminately bestowed, and there may be some truth in this, for I have observed that what men prize most is a privilege, even if it be that of chief mourner at a funeral. But is there not danger that it will be valued at more than its worth if denied, and that some illegitimate way will be sought to make up for the want of it? Men who have a voice in public affairs are at once affiliated with one or other of the great parties between which society is divided, merge their individual hopes and opinions in its safer, because more generalized, hopes and opinions, are disciplined by its tactics, and acquire, to a certain degree, the orderly qualities of an army. They no longer belong to a class, but to a body corporate. Of one thing, at least, we may be certain, that, under whatever method of helping things to go wrong man's wit can contrive, those who have the divine right to govern will be found to govern in the end, and that the highest privilege to which the majority of mankind can aspire is that of being governed by those wiser than they. Universal suffrage has in the United States sometimes been made the instrument of inconsiderate changes, under the notion of reform, and this from a misconception of the true meaning of popular government. One of these has been the substitution in many of the States of popular election for official selection in the choice of judges. The same system applied to military officers was the source of much evil during our civil war, and, I believe, had to be abandoned. But it has been also true that on all great questions of national policy a reserve of prudence and discretion has been brought out at the critical moment to turn the scale in favor of a wiser decision. An appeal to the reason of the people has never been known to fail in the long run. It is, perhaps, true that, by effacing the principle of passive obedience, democracy, ill understood, has slackened the spring of that ductility to discipline which is essential to "the unity and married calm of States." But I feel assured that experience and necessity will cure this evil, as they have shown their power to cure others. And

under what frame of policy have evils ever been remedied till they become intolerable, and shook men out of their indolent indifference through their fears?

We are told that the inevitable result of democracy is to sap the foundations of personal independence, to weaken the principle of authority, to lessen the respect due to eminence, whether in station, virtue, or genius. If these things were so, society could not hold together. Perhaps the best forcing-house of robust individuality would be where public opinion is inclined to be most overbearing, as he must be of heroic temper who should walk along Piccadilly at the height of the season in a soft hat. As for authority, it is one of the symptoms of the time that the religious reverence for it is declining everywhere, but this is due partly to the fact that state-craft is no longer looked upon as a mystery, but as a business, and partly to the decay of superstition, by which I mean the habit of respecting what we are told to respect rather than what is respectable in itself. There is more rough and tumble in the American democracy than is altogether agreeable to people of sensitive nerves and refined habits, and the people take their political duties lightly and laughingly, as is, perhaps, neither unnatural nor unbecoming in a young giant. Democracies can no more jump away from their own shadows than the rest of us can. They no doubt sometimes make mistakes and pay honor to men who do not deserve it. But they do this because they believe them worthy of it, and though it be true that the idol is the measure of the worshipper, yet the worship has in it the germ of a nobler religion. But is it democracies alone that fall into these errors? I, who have seen it proposed to erect a statue to Hudson, the railway king, and have heard Louis Napoleon hailed as the savior of society by men who certainly had no democratic associations or leanings, am not ready to think so. But democracies have likewise their finer instincts. I have also seen the wisest statesman and most pregnant speaker of our generation, a man of humble birth and ungainly manners, of little culture beyond what his own genius supplied, become more absolute in power than any monarch of modern times through the reverence of his countrymen for his honesty, his wisdom, his sincerity, his faith in God and man, and the nobly humane simplicity of his

character. And I remember another whom popular respect enveloped as with a halo, the least vulgar of men, the most austere genial, and the most independent of opinion. Wherever he went he never met a stranger, but everywhere neighbors and friends proud of him as their ornament and decoration. Institutions which could bear and breed such men as Lincoln and Emerson had surely some energy for good. No, amid all the fruitless turmoil and miscarriage of the world, if there be one thing steadfast and of favorable omen, one thing to make optimism distrust its own obscure distrust, it is the rooted instinct in men to admire what is better and more beautiful than themselves. The touchstone of political and social institutions is their ability to supply them with worthy objects of this sentiment, which is the very tap-root of civilization and progress. There would seem to be no readier way of feeding it with the elements of growth and vigor than such an organization of society as will enable men to respect themselves, and so to justify them in respecting others.

Such a result is quite possible under other conditions than those of an avowedly democratical Constitution. For I take it that the real essence of democracy was fairly enough defined by the First Napoleon when he said that the French Revolution meant "*la carrière ouverte aux talents*"—a clear pathway for merit of whatever kind. I should be inclined to paraphrase this by calling democracy that form of society, no matter what its political classification, in which every man had a chance and knew that he had it. If a man can climb, and feels himself encouraged to climb, from a coalpit to the highest position for which he is fitted, he can well afford to be indifferent what name is given to the government under which he lives. The Bailli of Mirabeau, uncle of the more famous tribune of that name, wrote in 1771: "The English are, in my opinion, a hundred times more agitated and more unfortunate than the very Algerines themselves, because they do not know and will not know till the destruction of their over-swollen power, which I believe very near, whether they are monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy, and wish to play the part of all three." England has not been obliging enough to fulfil the Bailli's prophecy, and perhaps it was this very carelessness about the name, and concern about the substance of popular government,

this skill in getting the best out of things as they are, in utilizing all the motives which influence men, and in giving one direction to many impulses, that has been a principal factor in her greatness and power. Perhaps it is fortunate to have an unwritten Constitution, for men are prone to be tinkering the work of their own hands, whereas they are more willing to let time and circumstance mend or modify what time and circumstance have made. All free governments, whatever their name, are in reality governments by public opinion, and it is on the quality of this public opinion that their prosperity depends. It is, therefore, their first duty to purify the element from which they draw the breath of life. With the growth of democracy grows also the fear, if not the danger, that this atmosphere may be corrupted with poisonous exhalations from lower and more malarious levels, and the question of sanitation becomes more instant and pressing. Democracy in its best sense is merely the letting in of light and air. Lord Sherbrooke, with his usual epigrammatic terseness, bids you educate your future rulers. But would this alone be a sufficient safeguard? To educate the intelligence is to enlarge the horizon of its desires and wants. And it is well that this should be so. But the enterprise must go deeper and prepare the way for satisfying those desires and wants in so far as they are legitimate. What is really ominous of danger to the existing order of things is not democracy (which, properly understood, is a conservative force), but the Socialism which may find a fulcrum in it. If we cannot equalize conditions and fortunes any more than we can equalize the brains of men—and a very sagacious person has said that "where two men ride of a horse one must ride behind"—we can yet, perhaps, do something to correct those methods and influences that lead to enormous inequalities, and to prevent their growing more enormous. It is all very well to pooh-pooh Mr. George and to prove him mistaken in his political economy. I do not believe that land should be divided because the quantity of it is limited by nature. Of what may this not be said? *A fortiori*, we might on the same principle insist on a division of human wit, for I have observed that the quantity of this has been even more inconveniently limited. Mr. George himself has an inequitably large share of it. But he is right in his impelling

motive, right, also, I am convinced, in insisting
 that humanity makes a part, by far the most im-
 portant part, of political economy, and in think-
 ing man to be of more concern and more con-
 vincing than the longest columns of figures
 in the world. For unless you include human
 nature in your addition, your total is sure to be
 wrong and your deductions from it fallacious.
 Communism means barbarism, but Socialism
 means, or wishes to mean, cooperation and com-
 munity of interests, sympathy, the giving to the
 hands not so large a share as to the brains, but a
 larger share than hitherto in the wealth they must
 combine to produce—means, in short, the practi-
 cal application of Christianity to life, and has in
 it the secret of an orderly and benign reconstruc-
 tion. State Socialism would cut off the very roots
 in personal character—self-help, forethought, and
 frugality—which nourish and sustain the trunk
 and branches of every vigorous Commonwealth.

I do not believe in violent changes, nor do
 I expect them. Things in possession have a very
 firm grip. One of the strongest cements of so-
 ciety is the conviction of mankind that the state
 of things into which they are born is a part of
 the order of the universe, as natural, let us say,
 as that the sun should go round the earth. It is
 a conviction that they will not surrender except
 on compulsion, and a wise society should look
 to it that this compulsion be not put upon them.
 For the individual man there is no radical cure,
 outside of human nature itself, for the evils to
 which human nature is heir. The rule will always
 hold good that you must

Be your own palace or the world's your gaol.

But for artificial evils, for evils that spring from
 want of thought, thought must find a remedy
 somewhere. There has been no period of time
 in which wealth has been more sensible of its
 duties than now. It builds hospitals, it estab-
 lishes missions among the poor, it endows
 schools. It is one of the advantages of accumu-
 lated wealth, and of the leisure it renders pos-
 sible, that people have time to think of the
 wants and sorrows of their fellows. But all these
 remedies are partial and palliative merely. It
 is as if we should apply plasters to a single pus-
 tule of the small-pox with a view of driving out
 the disease. The true way is to discover and to
 extirpate the germs. As society is now consti-
 tuted these are in the air it breathes, in the
 water it drinks, in things that seem, and which
 it has always believed, to be the most innocent
 and healthful. The evil elements it neglects
 corrupt these in their springs and pollute them
 in their courses. Let us be of good cheer, how-
 ever, remembering that the misfortunes hardest
 to bear are those which never come. The world
 has outlived much, and will outlive a great deal
 more, and men have contrived to be happy in
 it. It has shown the strength of its constitution
 in nothing more than in surviving the quack
 medicines it has tried. In the scales of the des-
 tinies brawn will never weigh so much as brain.
 Our healing is not in the storm or in the whirl-
 wind, it is not in monarchies, or aristocracies, or
 democracies, but will be revealed by the still
 small voice that speaks to the conscience and
 the heart, prompting us to a wider and wiser
 humanity.

FRANCIS PARKMAN

1823 - 1893

... a descendant of John Cotton, and a clergyman's son, who detested Puritanism and the clergy; who, coming to manhood in the eighteen-forties, hated the very words Transcendentalism, Philosophy, Religion, Reform, an inheritor of property, trained at Harvard, and an Overseer and Fellow of this University, who disliked the ideals of culture and refinement, a member of the Saturday Club who was bored with literary talk and literary people, a staunch American who despised democracy as thoroughly as Alexander Hamilton, and thought suffrage a failure; a nineteenth century historian who cared nothing for philosophy, science, or the larger lessons of history itself; a fascinating realistic writer who admired Scott, Byron, and Cooper for their tales of action, and despised Wordsworth and Thoreau as effeminate sentimentalists who were preoccupied with themselves.

—BLISS PERRY, *The American Spirit In Literature* (1918), pp. 182-183.

Francis Parkman is the best American example of the *literary* historian, although Prescott, Motley, and Henry Adams are also to be remembered. The type seems almost obsolete, for latter-day historians are usually closer to science than to literature. Back of Parkman, however, stands a long line of historians who were also men of letters, and it includes Herodotus, Thucydides, Livy, Tacitus, Gibbon, Macaulay, Green, Irving, Prescott, and Motley.

With the exception of Parkman, American history until recent times attracted only such second-rate historical writers as George Bancroft. Seeking romantic materials such as they had found in Scott's historical novels, Irving, Prescott, and Motley turned to the Old World or to Spanish America for their themes, while Parkman devoted his life to the struggle between France and England for the possession of North America. Romantic as Parkman's theme seems now, it had little interest for the reading public of the 'fifties. Even his own father regarded the old French wars as merely "a contest of bushrangers for the possession of a wilderness," and his wife urged him to select a European theme—only to be told that he must write what he was made for. He was fortunate in finding, under the influence of Cooper, what was for him both a congenial and an intrinsically interesting theme; and he was lucky in finding it early. He writes:

"Before the end of the sophomore year my various schemes had crystallized into a plan of writing a story of what was then known as the 'Old French War,'—that is, the war that ended in the conquest of Canada,—for here, as it seemed to me, the forest drama was more stirring and the forest stage more thronged with appropriate

actors than in any other passage of our history. It was not till some years later that I enlarged the plan to include the whole course of the American conflict between France and England, or, in other words, the history of the American forest, for this was the light in which I regarded it. My theme fascinated me, and I was haunted with wilderness images day and night."

An important part of Parkman's preparation for his work was the journey in 1846 to the Far West described in *The Oregon Trail* (1847, 1849). Of the five months which he spent on the prairies, he lived for five weeks in a village of the Ogillalah Sioux Indians. More fortunate than Cooper, he came to know Indians whose way of life had not been changed by contact with the white man. In the West, too, Parkman studied the various types of frontiersmen. In fact, as he fully realized, every stage in his journey westward was the equivalent of a journey backward into more primitive times.

The journey to the West nearly killed Parkman, who was taken sick soon after leaving St. Louis. Spartan-like, he refused to return to the settlements for medical attention. During the remainder of his life he was often ill and for a time almost blind. Sometimes he could use his eyes only fifteen minutes a day. Under nearly every handicap except poverty, he persisted until he completed his life-work. His books can never be wholly superseded, for his first-hand knowledge of the frontier gives them in some degree the character of source material. In his own words, his aim as a historian

"was, while scrupulously and rigorously adhering to the truth of facts, to animate them with the life of the past, and so far as might be, clothe the skeleton with flesh. Faithfulness to the truth of history involves far more than a research, however patient and scrupulous, into special facts. The narrator must seek to imbue himself with the life and spirit of the time. He must study events in their bearings near and remote; in the character, habits, and manners of those who took part to them. He must be, as it were, a sharer or a spectator of the action he describes."

Another side of Parkman's work, almost forgotten, is his criticism of American life and thought, which is illustrated in "The Failure of Universal Suffrage" in the *North American Review* for July-August, 1878. The older New England writers did not like many of the tendencies manifested in the new America of the 'seventies. A Boston Brahmin with Parkman's historical training might well have some shrewd criticism of the course of American social and political life in the "gilded age." Parkman was more outspoken than even James Russell Lowell. One is reminded of Cooper writing before him, and H. L. Mencken in our time.

There are biographies of Parkman by Charles H. Farnham (1900), H. D. Sedgwick (1904), and Mason Wade (1942), who in 1947 published an edition of Parkman's recently discovered *Journals*. Wilbur L. Schramm's *Francis Parkman: Representative Selections* (1938) contains a bibliography and an introductory essay. Three excellent articles on Parkman are those of John Fiske in *A Century of Science* (1899), Edward Gaylord Bourne in *Essays in Historical Criticism* (1901), and Bliss Perry's "Some Personal Qualities of Francis Parkman" in the *Yale Review* for April, 1924.

The selection from *Montcalm and Wolfe* (1884) represents Parkman's writing at its maturest and best. It also pictures the grand climax of the contest between France and England for dominion in the New World.

from MONTCALM AND WOLFE*
(1884)

CHAPTER XXVII. THE HEIGHTS OF
ABRAHAM 1759

Meanwhile a deep cloud fell on the English. Since the siege began, Wolfe had passed with ceaseless energy from camp to camp, animating the troops, observing everything, and directing everything; but now the pale face and tall lean form were seen no more, and the rumor spread that the general was dangerously ill. He had in fact been seized by an access of the disease that had tortured him for some time past; and fever had followed. His quarters were at a French farmhouse in the camp at Montmorenci, and here, as he lay in an upper chamber, helpless in bed, his singular and most unmilitary features haggard with disease and drawn with pain, no man could less have looked the hero. But as the needle, though quivering, points always to the pole, so, through torment and languor and the heats of fever, the mind of Wolfe dwelt on the capture of Quebec. His illness, which began before the twentieth of August, had so far subsided on the twenty-fifth that Knox wrote in his Diary of that day: "His Excellency General Wolfe is on the recovery, to the inconceivable joy of the whole army." On the twenty-ninth he was able to write or dictate a letter to the three brigadiers, Monckton, Townsend, and Murray: "That the public service may not suffer by the General's indisposition, he begs the brigadiers will meet and consult together for the public utility and advantage, and consider of the best method to attack the enemy." The letter then proposes three plans, all bold to audacity. The first was to send a part of the army to ford the Montmorenci eight or nine miles above its mouth, march through the forest, and fall on the rear of the French at Beauport, while the rest landed and attacked them in front. The second was to cross the ford at the mouth of the Montmorenci and march along the strand, under the French intrenchments, till a place could be found where the troops might climb the heights. The third was to make a general attack from boats at the Beauport flats. Wolfe had before entertained two other plans, one of which was to scale the

heights at St. Michel, about a league above Quebec, but this he had abandoned on learning that the French were there in force to receive him. The other was to storm the Lower Town, but this also he had abandoned, because the Upper Town, which commanded it, would still remain inaccessible.

The brigadiers met in consultation, rejected the three plans proposed in the letter, and advised that an attempt should be made to gain a footing on the north shore above the town, place the army between Montcalm and his base of supply, and so force him to fight or surrender. The scheme was similar to that of the heights of St. Michel. It seemed desperate, but so did all the rest; and if by chance it should succeed, the gain was far greater than could follow any success below the town. Wolfe embraced it at once.

Not that he saw much hope in it. He knew that every chance was against him. Disappointment in the past and gloom in the future, the pain and exhaustion of disease, toils, and anxieties "too great," in the words of Burke, "to be supported by a delicate constitution, and a body unequal to the vigorous and enterprising soul that it lodged," threw him at times into deep dejection. By those intimate with him he was heard to say that he would not go back defeated, "to be exposed to the censure and reproach of an ignorant populace." In other moods he felt that he ought not to sacrifice what was left of his diminished army in vain conflict with hopeless obstacles. But his final resolve once taken, he would not swerve from it. His fear was that he might not be able to lead his troops in person. "I know perfectly well you cannot cure me," he said to his physician; "but pray make me up so that I may be without pain for a few days, and able to do my duty: that is all I want."

In a despatch which Wolfe had written to Pitt, Admiral Saunders conceived that he had ascribed to the fleet more than its just share in the disaster at Montmorenci; and he sent him a letter on the subject. Major Barré kept it from the invalid till the fever had abated. Wolfe then wrote a long answer, which reveals his mixed dejection and resolve. He affirms the justice of what Saunders had said, but adds: "I shall leave out that part of my letter to Mr. Pitt which you object to. I am sensible of my own errors in

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the course of the campaign, see clearly wherein I have been deficient, and think a little more or less blame to a man that must necessarily be ruined, of little or no consequence. I take the blame of that unlucky day entirely upon my own shoulders, and I expect to suffer for it." Then, speaking of the new project of an attack above Quebec, he says despondingly: "My ill state of health prevents me from executing my own plan, it is of too desperate a nature to order others to execute." He proceeds, however, to give directions for it. "It will be necessary to run as many small craft as possible above the town, with provisions for six weeks, for about five thousand, which is all I intend to take. My letters, I hope, will be ready to-morrow, and I hope I shall have strength to lead these men to wherever we can find the enemy."

On the next day, the last of August, he was able for the first time to leave the house. It was on this same day that he wrote his last letter to his mother: "My writing to you will convince you that no personal evils worse than defeats and disappointments have fallen upon me. The enemy puts nothing to risk, and I can't in conscience put the whole army to risk. My antagonist has wisely shut himself up in inaccessible intrenchments, so that I can't get at him without spilling a torrent of blood, and that perhaps to little purpose. The Marquis de Montcalm is at the head of a great number of bad soldiers, and I am at the head of a small number of good ones, that wish for nothing so much as to fight him; but the wary old fellow avoids an action, doubtful of the behavior of his army. People must be of the profession to understand the disadvantages and difficulties we labor under, arising from the uncommon natural strength of the country."

On the second of September a vessel was sent to England with his last despatch to Pitt. It begins thus: "The obstacles we have met with in the operations of the campaign are much greater than we had reason to expect or could foresee; not so much from the number of the enemy (though superior to us) as from the natural strength of the country, which the Marquis of Montcalm seems wisely to depend upon. When I learned that succors of all kinds had been thrown into Quebec; that five battalions of regular troops, completed from the best inhabitants of the country, some of the troops of

the colony, and every Canadian that was able to bear arms, besides several nations of savages, had taken the field in a very advantageous situation,—I could not flatter myself that I should be able to reduce the place. I sought, however, an occasion to attack their army, knowing well that with these troops I was able to fight, and hoping that a victory might disperse them." Then, after recounting the events of the campaign with admirable clearness, he continues: "I found myself so ill, and am still so weak, that I begged the general officers to consult together for the general utility. They are all of opinion that, as more ships and provisions are now got above the town, they should try, by conveying up a corps of four or five thousand men (which is nearly the whole strength of the army after the Points of Levi and Orleans are left in a proper state of defence), to draw the enemy from their present situation and bring them to an action. I have acquiesced in the proposal, and we are preparing to put it into execution." The letter ends thus "By the list of disabled officers, many of whom are of rank, you may perceive that the army is much weakened. By the nature of the river, the most formidable part of this armament is deprived of the power of acting, yet we have almost the whole force of Canada to oppose. In this situation there is such a choice of difficulties that I own myself at a loss how to determine. The affairs of Great Britain, I know, require the most vigorous measures; but the courage of a handful of brave troops should be exerted only when there is some hope of a favorable event; however, you may be assured that the small part of the campaign which remains shall be employed, as far as I am able, for the honor of His Majesty, and the interest of the nation, in which I am sure of being well seconded by the Admiral and by the generals; happy if our efforts here can contribute to the success of His Majesty's arms in any other parts of America."

Some days later, he wrote to the Earl of Holderness: "The Marquis of Montcalm has a numerous body of armed men (I cannot call it an army), and the strongest country perhaps in the world. Our fleet blocks up the river above and below the town, but can give no manner of aid in an attack upon the Canadian army. We are now here with about thirty-six hundred men, waiting to attack them when and wherever

they can best be got at. I am so far recovered as to do business, but my constitution is entirely ruined, without the consolation of doing any considerable service to the state, and without any prospect of it." He had just learned, through the letter brought from Amherst by Ensign Hutchins, that he could expect no help from that quarter.

Perhaps he was as near despair as his undaunted nature was capable of being. In his present state of body and mind he was a hero without the light and cheer of heroism. He flattered himself with no illusions, but saw the worst and faced it all. He seems to have been entirely without excitement. The languor of disease, the desperation of the chances, and the greatness of the stake may have wrought to tranquillize him. His energy was doubly tasked: to bear up his own sinking frame, and to achieve an almost hopeless feat of arms.

Audacious as it was, his plan cannot be called rash if we may accept the statement of two well-informed writers on the French side. They say that on the tenth of September the English naval commanders held a council on board the flagship, in which it was resolved that the lateness of the season required the fleet to leave Quebec without delay. They say further that Wolfe then went to the admiral, told him that he had found a place where the heights could be scaled, that he would send up a hundred and fifty picked men to feel the way, and that if they gained a lodgment at the top, the other troops should follow; if, on the other hand, the French were there in force to oppose them, he would not sacrifice the army in a hopeless attempt, but embark them for home, consoled by the thought that all had been done that man could do. On this, concludes the story, the admiral and his officers consented to wait the result.

As Wolfe had informed Pitt, his army was greatly weakened. Since the end of June his loss in killed and wounded was more than eight hundred and fifty, including two colonels, two majors, nineteen captains, and thirty-four subalterns; and to these were to be added a greater number of disabled by disease.

The squadron of Admiral Holmes above Quebec had now increased to twenty-two vessels, great and small. One of the last that went up was a diminutive schooner, armed with a few swivels, and jocosely named the "Terror of

France." She sailed by the town in broad daylight, the French, incensed at her impudence, blazing at her from all their batteries; but she passed unharmed, anchored by the Admiral's ship, and saluted him triumphantly with her swivels.

Wolfe's first move toward executing his plan was the critical one of evacuating the camp at Montmorenci. This was accomplished on the third of September. Montcalm sent a strong force to fall on the rear of the retiring English. Monckton saw the movement from Point Levi, embarked two battalions in the boats of the fleet, and made a feint of landing at Beauport. Montcalm recalled his troops to repulse the threatened attack; and the English withdrew from Montmorenci unmolested, some to the Point of Orleans, others to Point Levi. On the night of the fourth a fleet of flatboats passed above the town with the baggage and stores. On the fifth, Murray, with four battalions, marched up the river Etechemin, and forded it under a hot fire from the French batteries at Sillery. Monckton and Townshend followed with three more battalions, and the united force, of about thirty-six hundred men, was embarked on board the ships of Holmes, where Wolfe joined them on the same evening.

These movements of the English filled the French commanders with mingled perplexity, anxiety, and hope. A deserter told them that Admiral Saunders was impatient to be gone. Vaudreuil grew confident. "The breaking up of the camp at Montmorenci," he says, "and the abandonment of the intrenchments there, the reembarkation on board the vessels above Quebec of the troops who had encamped on the south bank, the movements of these vessels, the removal of the heaviest pieces of artillery from the batteries of Point Levi,—these and the lateness of the season all combined to announce the speedy departure of the fleet, several vessels of which had even sailed down the river already. The prisoners and the deserters who daily came in told us that this was the common report in their army." He wrote to Bourlamaque on the first of September: "Everything proves that the grand design of the English has failed."

Yet he was ceaselessly watchful. So was Montcalm; and he, too, on the night of the second, snatched a moment to write to Bourlamaque from his headquarters in the stone house, by the

river of Beauport: "The night is dark; it rains; our troops are in their tents, with clothes on, ready for an alarm, I in my boots, my horses saddled. In fact, this is my usual way. I wish you were here, for I cannot be everywhere, though I multiply myself, and have not taken off my clothes since the twenty-third of June." On the eleventh of September he wrote his last letter to Bourlamaque, and probably the last that his pen ever traced. "I am overwhelmed with work, and should often lose temper, like you, if I did not remember that I am paid by Europe for not losing it. Nothing new since my last I give the enemy another month, or something less, to stay here." The more sanguine Vaudreuil would hardly give them a week.

Meanwhile, no precaution was spared. The force under Bougainville above Quebec was raised to three thousand men. He was ordered to watch the shore as far as Jacques-Cartier, and follow with his main body every movement of Holmes's squadron. There was little fear of the heights near the town; they were thought inaccessible. Even Montcalm believed them safe, and had expressed himself to that effect some time before. "We need not suppose," he wrote to Vaudreuil, "that the enemy have wings"; and again, speaking of the very place where Wolfe afterwards landed, "I swear to you that a hundred men posted there would stop their whole army." He was right. A hundred watchful and determined men could have held the position long enough for reinforcements to come up.

The hundred men were there. Captain de Vergor, of the colony troops, commanded them, and reinforcements were within his call; for the battalion of Guienne had been ordered to encamp close at hand on the Plains of Abraham. Vergor's post, called Anse du Foulon, was a mile and a half from Quebec. A little beyond it, by the brink of the cliffs, was another post, called Samos, held by seventy men with four cannon; and, beyond this again, the heights of Sillery were guarded by a hundred and thirty men, also with cannon. These were outposts of Bougainville, whose headquarters were at Cap-Rouge, six miles above Sillery, and whose troops were in continual movement along the intervening shore. Thus all was vigilance; for while the French were strong in the hope of speedy delivery, they felt that there was no safety till the tents of the invader had vanished from their

shores and his ships from their river. "What we knew," says one of them, "of the character of M Wolfe, that impetuous, bold, and intrepid warrior, prepared us for a last attack before he left us."

Wolfe had been very ill on the evening of the fourth. The troops knew it, and their spirits sank; but, after a night of torment, he grew better, and was soon among them again, rekindling their ardor, and imparting a cheer that he could not share. For himself he had no pity; but when he heard of the illness of two officers in one of the ships, he sent them a message of warm sympathy, advised them to return to Point Levi, and offered them his own barge and an escort. They thanked him, but replied that, come what might, they would see the enterprise to an end. Another officer remarked in his hearing that one of the invalids had a very delicate constitution. "Don't tell me of constitution," said Wolfe; "he has good spirit, and good spirit will carry a man through everything." An immense moral force bore up his own frail body and forced it to its work.

Major Robert Stobo, who, five years before, had been given as a hostage to the French at the capture of Fort Necessity, arrived about this time in a vessel from Halifax. He had long been a prisoner at Quebec, not always in close custody, and had used his opportunities to acquaint himself with the neighborhood. In the spring of this year he and an officer of rangers named Stevens had made their escape with extraordinary skill and daring; and he now returned to give his countrymen the benefit of his local knowledge. His biographer says that it was he who directed Wolfe in the choice of a landing-place. Be this as it may, Wolfe in person examined the river and the shores as far as Point-aux-Trembles; till at length, landing on the south side a little above Quebec, and looking across the water with a telescope, he descried a path that ran with a long slope up the face of the woody precipice, and saw at the top a cluster of tents. They were those of Vergor's guard at the Anse du Foulon, now called Wolfe's Cove. As he could see but ten or twelve of them, he thought that the guard could not be numerous, and might be overpowered. His hope would have been stronger if he had known that Vergor had once been tried for misconduct and cowardice in the surrender of Beauséjour, and saved

from merited disgrace by the friendship of Bigot and the protection of Vaudreuil.

The morning of the seventh was fair and warm, and the vessels of Holmes, their crowded decks gay with scarlet uniforms, sailed up the river to Cap-Rouge. A lively scene awaited them; for here were the headquarters of Bougainville, and here lay his principal force, while the rest watched the banks above and below. The cove into which the little river runs was guarded by floating batteries, the surrounding shore was defended by breastworks; and a large body of regulars, militia, and mounted Canadians in blue uniforms moved to and fro, with restless activity, on the hills behind. When the vessels came to anchor, the horsemen dismounted and formed in line with the infantry; then, with loud shouts, the whole rushed down the heights to man their works at the shore. That true Briton, Captain Knox, looked on with a critical eye from the gangway of his ship, and wrote that night in his Diary that they had made a ridiculous noise. "How different!" he exclaims, "how nobly awful and expressive of true valor is the customary silence of the British troops!"

In the afternoon the ships opened fire, while the troops entered the boats and rowed up and down as if looking for a landing-place. It was but a feint of Wolfe to deceive Bougainville as to his real design. A heavy easterly rain set in on the next morning, and lasted two days without respite. All operations were suspended, and the men suffered greatly in the crowded transports. Half of them were therefore landed on the south shore, where they made their quarters in the village of St. Nicolas, refreshed themselves, and dried their wet clothing, knapsacks, and blankets.

For several successive days the squadron of Holmes was allowed to drift up the river with the flood tide and down with the ebb, thus passing and repassing incessantly between the neighborhood of Quebec on one hand, and a point high above Cap-Rouge on the other; while Bougainville, perplexed, and always expecting an attack, followed the ships to and fro along the shore, by day and by night, till his men were exhausted with ceaseless forced marches.

At last the time for action came. On Wednesday, the twelfth, the troops at St. Nicolas were embarked again, and all were told to hold themselves in readiness. Wolfe, from the flagship

"Sutherland," issued his last general orders. "The enemy's force is now divided, great scarcity of provisions in their camp, and universal discontent among the Canadians. Our troops below are in readiness to join us, all the light artillery and tools are embarked at the Point of Levi, and the troops will land where the French seem least to expect it. The first body that gets on shore is to march directly to the enemy and drive them from any little post they may occupy; the officers must be careful that the succeeding bodies do not by any mistake fire on those who go before them. The battalions must form on the upper ground with expedition, and be ready to charge whatever presents itself. When the artillery and troops are landed, a corps will be left to secure the landing-place, while the rest march on and endeavor to bring the Canadians and French to a battle. The officers and men will remember what their country expects from them, and what a determined body of soldiers inured to war is capable of doing against five weak French battalions mingled with a disorderly peasantry."

The spirit of the army answered to that of its chief. The troops loved and admired their general, trusted their officers, and were ready for any attempt. "Nay, how could it be otherwise," quaintly asks honest Sergeant John Johnson, of the fifty-eighth regiment, "being at the heels of gentlemen whose whole thirst, equal with their general, was for glory? We had seen them tried, and always found them sterling. We knew that they would stand by us to the last extremity."

Wolfe had thirty-six hundred men and officers with him on board the vessels of Holmes; and he now sent orders to Colonel Burton at Point Levi to bring to his aid all who could be spared from that place and the Point of Orleans. They were to march along the south bank, after night-fall, and wait further orders at a designated spot convenient for embarkation. Their number was about twelve hundred, so that the entire force destined for the enterprise was at the utmost forty-eight hundred. With these, Wolfe meant to climb the heights of Abraham in the teeth of an enemy who, though much reduced, were still twice as numerous as their assailants.

Admiral Saunders lay with the main fleet in the Basin of Quebec. This excellent officer, whatever may have been his views as to the necessity of a speedy departure, aided Wolfe to the last

with unflinching energy and zeal. It was agreed between them that while the General made the real attack, the Admiral should engage Montcalm's attention by a pretended one. As night approached, the fleet ranged itself along the Beauport shore; the boats were lowered and filled with sailors, marines, and the few troops that had been left behind; while ship signalled to ship, cannon flashed and thundered, and shot ploughed the beach, as if to clear a way for assailants to land. In the gloom of the evening the effect was imposing. Montcalm, who thought that the movements of the English above the town were only a feint, that their main force was still below it, and that their real attack would be made there, was completely deceived, and massed the troops in front of Beauport to repel the expected landing. But while in the fleet of Saunders all was uproar and ostentatious menace, the danger was ten miles away, where the squadron of Holmes lay tranquil and silent at its anchorage off Cap-Rouge.

It was less tranquil than it seemed. All on board knew that a blow might be struck that night, though only a few high officers knew where. Colonel Howe, of the light infantry, called for volunteers to lead the unknown and desperate venture, promising, in the words of one of them, "that if any of us survived we might depend on being recommended to the general." As many as were wanted—twenty-four in all—soon came forward. Thirty large bateaux and some boats belonging to the squadron lay moored alongside the vessels; and late in the evening the troops were ordered into them, the twenty-four volunteers taking their place in the foremost. They held in all about seventeen hundred men. The rest remained on board.

Bougainville could discern the movement, and misjudged it, thinking that he himself was to be attacked. The tide was still flowing; and, the better to deceive him, the vessels and boats were allowed to drift upward with it for a little distance, as if to land above Cap-Rouge.

The day had been fortunate for Wolfe. Two deserters came from the camp of Bougainville with intelligence that, at ebb tide on the next night, he was to send down a convoy of provisions to Montcalm. The necessities of the camp at Beauport, and the difficulties of transportation by land, had before compelled the French to resort to this perilous means of conveying

supplies; and their boats, drifting in darkness under the shadows of the northern shore, had commonly passed in safety. Wolfe saw at once that, if his own boats went down in advance of the convoy, he could turn the intelligence of the deserters to good account.

He was still on board the "Sutherland." Every preparation was made, and every order given; it only remained to wait the turning of the tide. Seated with him in the cabin was the commander of the sloop-of-war "Porcupine," his former schoolfellow, John Jervis, afterwards Earl St Vincent. Wolfe told him that he expected to die in the battle of the next day; and taking from his bosom a miniature of Miss Lowther, his betrothed, he gave it to him with a request that he would return it to her if the presentiment should prove true.

Towards two o'clock the tide began to ebb, and a fresh wind blew down the river. Two lanterns were raised into the maintop shrouds of the "Sutherland." It was the appointed signal; the boats cast off and fell down with the current, those of the light infantry leading the way. The vessels with the rest of the troops had orders to follow a little later.

To look for a moment at the chances on which this bold adventure hung. First, the deserters told Wolfe that provision-boats were ordered to go down to Quebec that night; secondly, Bougainville countermanded them; thirdly, the sentries posted along the heights were told of the order, but not of the countermand; fourthly, Vergor at the Anse du Foulon had permitted most of his men, chiefly Canadians from Lorette, to go home for a time and work at their harvesting, on condition, it is said, that they should afterwards work in a neighboring field of his own; fifthly, he kept careless watch, and went quietly to bed; sixthly, the battalion of Guienne, ordered to take post on the Plains of Abraham, had, for reasons unexplained, remained encamped by the St. Charles; and lastly, when Bougainville saw Holmes's vessels drift down the stream, he did not tax his weary troops to follow them, thinking that they would return as usual with the flood tide. But for these conspiring circumstances New France might have lived a little longer, and the fruitless heroism of Wolfe would have passed, with countless other heroisms, into oblivion.

For full two hours the procession of boats,

borne on the current, steered silently down the St. Lawrence. The stars were visible, but the night was moonless and sufficiently dark. The general was in one of the foremost boats, and near him was a young midshipman, John Robi-
son, afterwards professor of natural philosophy in the University of Edinburgh. He used to tell in his later life how Wolfe, with a low voice, repeated Gray's "Elegy in a Country Church-
yard" to the officers about him. Probably it was to relieve the intense strain of his thoughts. Among the rest was the verse which his own fate was soon to illustrate,—

The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

"Gentlemen," he said, as his recital ended, "I would rather have written those lines than take Quebec." None were there to tell him that the hero is greater than the poet.

As they neared their destination, the tide bore them in towards the shore, and the mighty wall of rock and forest towered in darkness on their left. The dead stillness was suddenly broken by the sharp *Qui vive!* of a French sentry, invisible in the thick gloom. *France!* answered a Highland officer of Fraser's regiment from one of the boats of the light infantry. He had served in Holland, and spoke French fluently.

À quel régiment?

*De la Reine,*¹ replied the Highlander. He knew that a part of that corps was with Bougainville. The sentry, expecting the convoy of provisions, was satisfied, and did not ask for the password.

Soon after, the foremost boats were passing the heights of Samos, when another sentry challenged them, and they could see him through the darkness running down to the edge of the water, within range of a pistol-shot. In answer to his questions, the same officer replied, in French: "Provision-boats. Don't make a noise; the English will hear us." In fact, the sloop-of-war "Hunter" was anchored in the stream not far off. This time, again, the sentry let them pass. In a few moments they rounded the headland above the Anse du Foulon. There was no sentry there. The strong current swept the boats of the light infantry a little below the intended landing-place. They disembarked on a narrow

strand at the foot of heights as steep as a hill covered with trees can be. The twenty-four volunteers led the way, climbing with what silence they might, closely followed by a much larger body. When they reached the top they saw in the dim light a cluster of tents at a short distance, and immediately made a dash at them. Vergor leaped from bed and tried to run off, but was shot in the heel and captured. His men, taken by surprise, made little resistance. One or two were caught, and the rest fled.

The main body of troops waited in their boats by the edge of the strand. The heights near by were cleft by a great ravine choked with forest trees; and in its depths ran a little brook called Ruisseau St.-Denis, which, swollen by the late rains, fell plashing in the stillness over a rock. Other than this no sound could reach the strained ear of Wolfe but the gurgle of the tide and the cautious climbing of his advance-parties as they mounted the steep at some little distance from where he sat listening. At length from the top came a sound of musket-shots, followed by loud huzzas, and he knew that his men were masters of the position. The word was given; the troops leaped from the boats and scaled the heights, some here, some there, clutching at trees and bushes, their muskets slung at their backs. Tradition still points out the place, near the mouth of the ravine, where the foremost reached the top. Wolfe said to an officer near him: "You can try it, but I don't think you'll get up." He himself, however, found strength to drag himself up with the rest. The narrow slanting path on the face of the heights had been made impassable by trenches and abattis; but all obstructions were soon cleared away, and then the ascent was easy. In the gray of the morning the long file of red-coated soldiers moved quickly upward, and formed in order on the plateau above.

Before many of them had reached the top, cannon were heard close on the left. It was the battery at Samos firing on the boats in the rear and the vessels descending from Cap-Rouge. A party was sent to silence it; this was soon effected, and the more distant battery at Sillery was next attacked and taken. As fast as the boats were emptied they returned for the troops left on board the vessels and for those waiting on the southern shore under Colonel Burton.

The day broke in clouds and threatening

¹"To what regiment [do you belong]?" "The Queen's."

rain. Wolfe's battalions were drawn up along the crest of the heights. No enemy was in sight, though a body of Canadians had sallied from the town and moved along the strand towards the landing-place, whence they were quickly driven back. He had achieved the most critical part of his enterprise, yet the success that he coveted placed him in imminent danger. On one side was the garrison of Quebec and the army of Beauport, and Bougainville was on the other. Wolfe's alternative was victory or ruin; for if he should be overwhelmed by a combined attack, retreat would be hopeless. His feelings no man can know, but it would be safe to say that hesitation or doubt had no part in them.

He went to reconnoitre the ground, and soon came to the Plains of Abraham, so called from Abraham Martin, a pilot known as Maître Abraham, who had owned a piece of land here in the early times of the colony. The Plains were a tract of grass, tolerably level in most parts, patched here and there with cornfields, studded with clumps of bushes, and forming a part of the high plateau at the eastern end of which Quebec stood. On the south it was bounded by the declivities along the St. Lawrence; on the north, by those along the St. Charles, or rather along the meadows through which that lazy stream crawled like a writhing snake. At the place that Wolfe chose for his battle-field the plateau was less than a mile wide.

Thither the troops advanced, marched by files till they reached the ground, and then wheeled to form their line of battle, which stretched across the plateau and faced the city. It consisted of six battalions and the detached grenadiers from Louisbourg, all drawn up in ranks three deep. Its right wing was near the brink of the heights along the St. Lawrence; but the left could not reach those along the St. Charles. On this side a wide space was perforce left open, and there was danger of being outflanked. To prevent this, Brigadier Townshend was stationed here with two battalions, drawn up at right angles with the rest, and fronting the St. Charles. The battalion of Webb's regiment, under Colonel Burton, formed the reserve; the third battalion of Royal Americans was left to guard the landing; and Howe's light infantry occupied a wood far in the rear. Wolfe, with Monckton and Murray, commanded the front line, on which the heavy fighting was to

fall, and which, when all the troops had arrived, numbered less than thirty-five hundred men.

Quebec was not a mile distant, but they could not see it; for a ridge of broken ground intervened, called Buttes-à-Neveu, about six hundred paces off. The first division of troops had scarcely come up when, about six o'clock, this ridge was suddenly thronged with white uniforms. It was the battalion of Guienne, arrived at the eleventh hour from its camp by the St. Charles. Some time after there was hot firing in the rear. It came from a detachment of Bougainville's command attacking a house where some of the light infantry were posted. The assailants were repulsed, and the firing ceased. Light showers fell at intervals, besprinkling the troops as they stood patiently waiting the event.

Montcalm had passed a troubled night. Through all the evening the cannon bellowed from the ships of Saunders, and the boats of the fleet hovered in the dusk off the Beauport shore, threatening every moment to land. Troops lined the intrenchments till day, while the general walked the field that adjoined his headquarters till one in the morning, accompanied by the Chevalier Johnstone and Colonel Poulariez. Johnstone says that he was in great agitation, and took no rest all night. At daybreak he heard the sound of cannon above the town. It was the battery of Samos firing on the English ships. He had sent an officer to the quarters of Vaudreuil, which were much nearer Quebec, with orders to bring him word at once should anything unusual happen. But no word came, and about six o'clock he mounted and rode thither with Johnstone. As they advanced, the country behind the town opened more and more upon their sight, till at length, when opposite Vaudreuil's house, they saw across the St. Charles, some two miles away, the red ranks of British soldiers on the heights beyond.

"This is a serious business," Montcalm said; and sent off Johnstone at full gallop to bring up the troops from the centre and left of the camp. Those of the right were in motion already, doubtless by the governor's order. Vaudreuil came out of the house. Montcalm stopped for a few words with him; then set spurs to his horse, and rode over the bridge of St. Charles to the scene of danger. He rode with a fixed look, uttering not a word.

The army followed in such order as it might,

crossed the bridge in hot haste, passed under the northern rampart of Quebec, entered at the Palace Gate, and pressed on in headlong march along the quaint narrow streets of the warlike town: troops of Indians in scalp-locks and war-paint, a savage glitter in their deep-set eyes; bands of Canadians whose all was at stake,—faith, country, and home; the colony regulars; the battalions of Old France, a torrent of white uniforms and gleaming bayonets, La Sarre, Languedoc, Roussillon, Béarn,—victors of Oswego, William Henry, and Ticonderoga. So they swept on, poured out upon the plain, some by the gate of St Louis, and some by that of St John, and hurried, breathless, to where the banners of Guienne still fluttered on the ridge.

Montcalm was amazed at what he saw. He had expected a detachment, and he found an army. Full in sight before him stretched the lines of Wolfe: the close ranks of the English infantry, a silent wall of red, and the wild array of the Highlanders, with their waving tartans, and bagpipes screaming defiance. Vaudreuil had not come; but not the less was felt the evil of a divided authority and the jealousy of the rival chiefs. Montcalm waited long for the forces he had ordered to join him from the left wing of the army. He waited in vain. It is said that the governor had detained them, lest the English should attack the Beauport shore. Even if they did so, and succeeded, the French might defy them, could they but put Wolfe to rout on the Plains of Abraham. Neither did the garrison of Quebec come to the aid of Montcalm. He sent to Ramesay, its commander, for twenty-five field-pieces which were on the Palace battery. Ramesay would give him only three, saying that he wanted them for his own defence. There were orders and counter-orders; misunderstanding, haste, delay, perplexity.

Montcalm and his chief officers held a council of war. It is said that he and they alike were for immediate attack. His enemies declare that he was afraid lest Vaudreuil should arrive and take command; but the governor was not a man to assume responsibility at such a crisis. Others say that his impetuosity overcame his better judgment; and of this charge it is hard to acquit him. Bougainville was but a few miles distant, and some of his troops were much nearer; a messenger sent by way of Old Lorette could

have reached him in an hour and a half at most, and a combined attack in front and rear might have been concerted with him. If, moreover, Montcalm could have come to an understanding with Vaudreuil, his own force might have been strengthened by two or three thousand additional men from the town and the camp of Beauport; but he felt that there was no time to lose, for he imagined that Wolfe would soon be reinforced, which was impossible, and he believed that the English were fortifying themselves, which was no less an error. He has been blamed not only for fighting too soon, but for fighting at all. In this he could not choose. Fight he must, for Wolfe was now in a position to cut off all his supplies. His men were full of ardor, and he resolved to attack before their ardor cooled. He spoke a few words to them in his keen, vehement way. "I remember very well how he looked," one of the Canadians, then a boy of eighteen, used to say in his old age; "he rode a black or dark bay horse along the front of our lines, brandishing his sword, as if to excite us to do our duty. He wore a coat with wide sleeves, which fell back as he raised his arm, and showed the white linen of the wristband."

The English waited the result with a composure which, if not quite real, was at least well feigned. The three field-pieces sent by Ramesay plied them with canister-shot, and fifteen hundred Canadians and Indians fusilladed them in front and flank. Over all the plain, from behind bushes and knolls and the edge of cornfields, puffs of smoke sprang incessantly from the guns of these hidden marksmen. Skirmishers were thrown out before the lines to hold them in check, and the soldiers were ordered to lie on the grass to avoid the shot. The firing was liveliest on the English left, where bands of sharpshooters got under the edge of the declivity, among thickets, and behind scattered houses, whence they killed and wounded a considerable number of Townshend's men. The light infantry were called up from the rear. The houses were taken and retaken, and one or more of them was burned.

Wolfe was everywhere. How cool he was, and why his followers loved him, is shown by an incident that happened in the course of the morning. One of his captains was shot through the lungs; and on recovering consciousness he saw the general standing at his side. Wolfe pressed

his hand, told him not to despair, praised his services, promised him early promotion, and sent an aide-de-camp to Monckton to beg that officer to keep the promise if he himself should fall.

It was towards ten o'clock when, from the high ground on the right of the line, Wolfe saw that the crisis was near. The French on the ridge had formed themselves into three bodies, regulars in the centre, regulars and Canadians on right and left. Two field-pieces, which had been dragged up the heights at Anse du Foulon, fired on them with grape-shot, and the troops, rising from the ground, prepared to receive them. In a few moments more they were in motion. They came on rapidly, uttering loud shouts, and firing as soon as they were within range. Their ranks, ill ordered at the best, were further confused by a number of Canadians who had been mixed among the regulars, and who, after hastily firing, threw themselves on the ground to reload. The British advanced a few rods; then halted and stood still. When the French were within forty paces the word of command rang out, and a crash of musketry answered all along the line. The volley was delivered with remarkable precision. In the battalions of the centre, which had suffered least from the enemy's bullets, the simultaneous explosion was afterwards said by the French officers to have sounded like a cannon-shot. Another volley followed, and then a furious clattering fire that lasted but a minute or two. When the smoke rose, a miserable sight was revealed: the ground cumbered with dead and wounded, the advancing masses stopped short and turned into a frantic mob, shouting, cursing, gesticulating. The order was given to charge. Then over the field rose the British cheer, mixed with the fierce yell of the Highland slogan. Some of the corps pushed forward with the bayonet; some advanced firing. The clansmen drew their broadswords and dashed on, keen and swift as bloodhounds. At the English right,

though the attacking column was broken to pieces, a fire was still kept up, chiefly, it seems, by sharpshooters from the bushes and cornfields, where they had lain for an hour or more. Here Wolfe himself led the charge, at the head of the Louisbourg grenadiers. A shot shattered his wrist. He wrapped his handkerchief about it and kept on. Another shot struck him, and he still advanced, when a third lodged in his breast. He staggered, and sat on the ground. Lieutenant Brown, of the grenadiers, one Henderson, a volunteer in the same company, and a private soldier, aided by an officer of artillery who ran to join them, carried him in their arms to the rear. He begged them to lay him down. They did so, and asked if he would have a surgeon. "There's no need," he answered; "it's all over with me." A moment after, one of them cried out. "They run; see how they run!" "Who run?" Wolfe demanded, like a man roused from sleep. "The enemy, sir. Egad, they give way everywhere!" "Go, one of you, to Colonel Burton," returned the dying man; "tell him to march Webb's regiment down to Charles River, to cut off their retreat from the bridge." Then, turning on his side, he murmured, "Now, God be praised, I will die in peace!" and in a few moments his gallant soul had fled.

Montcalm, still on horseback, was borne with the tide of fugitives towards the town. As he approached the walls a shot passed through his body. He kept his seat; two soldiers supported him, one on each side, and led his horse through the St. Louis Gate. On the open space within, among the excited crowd, were several women, drawn, no doubt, by eagerness to know the result of the fight. One of them recognized him, saw the streaming blood, and shrieked, "*O mon Dieu! mon Dieu! le Marquis est tué!*" "It's nothing, it's nothing," replied the death-stricken man; "don't be troubled for me, my good friends." ("*Ce n'est rien, ce n'est rien; ne vous affligez pas pour moi, mes bonnes amies.*")

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

1804 - 1864

Hawthorne's literary talent is of the first order. His subjects are generally not to me subjects of the highest interest, but his literary talent is of the first order, the finest, I think, which America has yet produced,—finer, by much, than Emerson's.

—MATTHEW ARNOLD, "Emerson" (1883).

Nathaniel Hawthorne, grandson of "Bold Hathorne" of the Revolutionary ballad, was born on the fourth of July, 1804, in Salem, Mass. "Salem," wrote William Tudor while Hawthorne was in his teens, ". . . is remarkable for the retired, secluded habits of its population." Hawthorne cannot be thoroughly understood without some knowledge of this decadent seaport town in which he grew up. In "The Custom-house," an essay prefixed to *The Scarlet Letter*, he complains that "there [in Salem] has never been, for me, the genial atmosphere which a literary man requires in order to ripen the best harvest of his mind." In another passage in the same essay he indicates his relation to his background:

"It is now [in 1850] nearly two centuries and a quarter since the original Briton [William Hathorne], the earliest emigrant of my name, made his appearance in the wild and forest-bordered settlement which has since become a city. And here his descendants have been born and died, and have mingled their earthly substance with the soil, until no small portion of it must necessarily be akin to the mortal frame wherewith, for a little while, I walk the streets. In part, therefore, the attachment which I speak of is the mere sensuous sympathy of dust for dust. Few of my countrymen can know what it is; nor, as frequent transplantation is perhaps better for the stock, need they consider it desirable to know."

Of "this grave, bearded, sable-cloaked, and steeple-crowned progenitor," Hawthorne writes, "He was a soldier, legislator, judge; he was a ruler in the Church; he had all the Puritanic traits, both evil and good." William's son John "made himself so conspicuous in the martyrdom of the witches, that their blood may fairly be said to have left a stain upon him." There was a family tradition, which figures in *The House of the Seven Gables*, that one of the victims cursed John Hathorne and his descendants, saying, "God will give him blood to drink." Continuing his sketch of the declining family, Hawthorne writes:

"Gradually they have sunk out of sight; as old houses, here and there about the streets, get covered half-way to the eaves by the accumulation of new soil. From father to son, for above a hundred years, they followed the sea; a grey-headed shipmaster, in each generation, retiring from the quarter-deck to the homestead,

while a boy of fourteen took the hereditary place before the mast, confronting the salt spray and the gale which had blustered against his sire and grandsire. The boy, also in due time, passed from the forecastle to the cabin, spent a tempestuous manhood, and returned from his world-wanderings, to grow old, and die, and mingle his dust with the natal earth."

Perhaps the decline in his family's importance had much to do with Hawthorne's pre-occupation with the Colonial past in which his remote ancestors had played so conspicuous a part. His father, a sea-captain, died when Nathaniel was only four years old. For many years of her life Hawthorne's mother lived in seclusion, taking her meals apart from her son and two daughters, all of whom lived much to themselves. A psychologist would be tempted to make much of the effect of all these circumstances upon the impressionable mind of a four-year-old boy. The man Hawthorne was cheerful in his quiet way, but the romancer's artistic imagination was full of gloom.

Until he went to college, he seems to have had no boy companions. His solitude and a temporary lameness threw him upon books as a resource. The novels of Scott were probably the most influential books that he read. In 1821 he wrote to his mother—the letter contains a postscript: "Do not show this letter":

"... I am quite reconciled to going to college, since I am to spend the vacations with you. Yet four years of the best part of my life is a great deal to throw away. I have not yet concluded what profession I shall have. The being a minister is of course out of the question. I should not think that even you could desire me to choose so dull a way of life. Oh, no, mother, I was not born to vegetate forever in one place, and to live and die as calm and tranquil as—a puddle of water. As to lawyers, there are so many of them already that one half of them (upon a moderate calculation) are in a state of actual starvation. A physician, then, seems to be 'Hobson's choice'; but yet I should not like to live by the diseases and infirmities of my fellow-creatures. And it would weigh very heavily on my conscience, in the course of my practice, if I should chance to send any unlucky patient 'ad inferum,' which being interpreted is, 'to the realms below.' Oh that I was rich enough to live without a profession! What do you think of my becoming an author, and relying for support upon my pen? Indeed, I think the illegibility of my handwriting is very author-like. How proud you would feel to see my works praised by the reviewers, as equal to the proudest productions of the scribbling sons of John Bull! . . ."

At Bowdoin College, to which he went at the age of seventeen, he was a classmate of Longfellow. The two were closer friends in later life than in college. In 1863 Mrs. James T. Fields wrote in her diary:

"Hawthorne was in the same class at college with Longfellow, whom he says he could not appreciate at that time. He was always finely dressed and was a tremendous student. Hawthorne was careless in dress and no student, but always reading desultorily right and left. Now they are deeply appreciative of each other."

Among Hawthorne's intimate college friends were Franklin Pierce, later President of the United States, and Horatio Bridge, an officer in the Navy. In dedicating his *Twice Told Tales* (1837) to the latter, Hawthorne wrote:

"If anybody is responsible for my being at this day an author, it is yourself. I know not whence your faith came, but while we were lads together at a country college, gathering blueberries in study hours under those tall, academic pines, or watching the great logs as they tumbled along the current of the Androscoggin, or shooting pigeons or gray squirrels in the woods, or bat-fowling in the summer twilight, or catching trout in that shadowy little stream which, I suppose, is still wandering riverward through the forest, though you and I will never cast a line in it again; two idle lads, in short (as we need not fear to acknowledge now), doing a hundred things that the Faculty never heard of, or else it would have been the worse for us—still, it was your prognostic of your friend's destiny that he was to be a writer of fiction."

After his graduation in 1825, Hawthorne returned to Salem, where, except for an occasional excursion, he lived in seclusion for the next twelve years. Except for an unimportant novel, *Fanshawe* (1828), he published no book of fiction until 1837. Under the influence of Scott he wrote stories of New England, many of them laid in Colonial times. Some of these he destroyed; others he published in magazines and annuals, seldom or never under his own name, so that they made little impression. Hawthorne had almost nothing of that business acumen which enables a writer to attract attention to his work. In October, 1836, Park Benjamin, a forgotten poet and journalist, wrote in the *American Monthly Magazine*: "If Mr. Hawthorne would but collect his various tales and essays into one volume, we can assure him that their success would be brilliant—certainly in England, perhaps in this country." Without Hawthorne's knowledge, Horatio Bridge guaranteed the publisher against loss in order to have the first volume of *Twice Told Tales* (1837) published. While the book was still in press, he wrote to the discouraged Hawthorne:

"Whether your book will sell extensively may be doubtful; but that is of small importance in the first one you publish. At all events, keep up your spirits till the result is ascertained; and, my word for it, there is more honor and emolument in stoic for you, from your writings, than you imagine. The bane of your life has been self-distrust."

The book attracted some favorable notices, including a review by Longfellow in the *North American Review*. Poe's well-known review came in 1842, when Hawthorne published a two-volume edition with additional material. Hawthorne's seclusion was gradually being broken down. In response to a letter from Longfellow, he wrote:

"Not to burden you with my correspondence, I have delayed a rejoinder to your very kind and cordial letter, until now. It gratifies me that you have occasionally felt an interest in my situation; but your quotation from Jean Paul about the 'lark's nest' makes me smile. You would have been much nearer the truth if you had pictured me as dwelling in an owl's nest? for mine is about as dismal, and like the owl I seldom venture aboard till after dusk. By some witchcraft or other—for I really cannot assign any reasonable why and wherefor—I have been carried apart from the main current of life, and find it impossible to get back again. Since we last met, which you remember was in Sawtell's room, where you read a farewell poem to the relics of the class,—ever since that time I have secluded myself from society; and yet I never meant any such thing, nor dreamed what sort of life I

was going to lead. I have made a captive of myself, and put me in a dungeon, and now I cannot find the key to let myself out,—and if the door were open, I should be almost afraid to come out. You tell me that you have met with troubles and changes. I know not what these may have been, but I can assure you that trouble is the next best thing to enjoyment, and that there is no late in this world so horrible as to have no share in either its joys or sorrows. For the past ten years, I have not lived, but only dreamed of living. It may be true that there have been some unsubstantial pleasures here in the shade, which I might have missed in the sunshine, but you cannot conceive how utterly devoid of satisfaction all my retrospects are. I have laid up no treasure of pleasant remembrances against old age; but there is some comfort in thinking that future years can hardly fail to be more varied and therefore more tolerable than the past.

“You give me more credit than I deserve, in supposing that I have led a studious life. I have indeed turned over a good many books, but in so desultory a way that it cannot be called study, nor has it left me the fruits of study. As to my literary efforts, I do not think much of them, neither is it worth while to be ashamed of them. They would have been better, I trust, if written under more favorable circumstances. I have had no external excitement,—no consciousness that the public would like what I wrote, nor much hope nor a passionate desire that they should do so. Nevertheless, having nothing else to be ambitious of, I have been considerably interested in literature, and if my writings had made any decided impression, I should have been stimulated to greater exertions; but there has been no warmth of approbation, so that I have always written with benumbed fingers. I have another great difficulty in the lack of materials; for I have seen so little of the world that I have nothing but thin air to concoct my stores of, and it is not easy to give a lifelike semblance to such shadowy stuff. Sometimes through a peep-hole I have caught a glimpse of the real world, and the two or three articles in which I have portrayed these glimpses please me better than the others. . . .”

The twelve years which Hawthorne lived in “the chamber under the eaves” left their mark upon him and upon his work. Years later he wrote:

“For a long, long time I have been occasionally visited with a singular dream; and I have an impression that I have dreamed it ever since I have been in England. It is, that I am still at college,—or, sometimes, even at school,—and there is a sense that I have been there unconscionably long, and have quite failed to make such progress as my contemporaries have done; and I seem to meet some of them with a feeling of shame and depression that broods over me as I think of it, even when awake. This dream, recurring all through these twenty or thirty years, must be one of the effects of that heavy seclusion in which I shut myself up for twelve years after leaving college, when everybody moved onward, and left me behind.”

One cause of Hawthorne’s gradual withdrawal from his seclusion was his growing intimacy with the Peabody family, especially with Sophia, whom he married in 1842. Of the other sisters, Mary was to become the wife of Horace Mann, the educator, and Elizabeth was a well-known Transcendentalist. Sophia was something like a Transcendental edition of Mrs. Browning. Until her marriage she was an invalid with a desire to paint. Unable to marry, Hawthorne in 1839 became weigher and gauger at the Boston Custom House. Beginning his work with en-

thusiasm, he gradually tired of it. His work left him little energy or time for writing; and he never could write well when there were other demands upon his time and energies. In 1841 he took the very extraordinary step—for a man who had so little sympathy with reformers and Transcendentalists—of joining the Brook Farm community and investing his savings in that idealistic enterprise. He seems to have hoped to find a place where after his marriage he could live inexpensively with congenial associates. His experiences at Brook Farm are well known from his account of them in *The American Notebooks* and in *The Blithedale Romance*—although the romance is not of course to be taken literally. His initial enthusiasm gave place to dissatisfaction. Unable to get out the money he had invested, he did finally manage to get in exchange rent-free the historic Old Manse in Concord, where Emerson had once lived. The introductory essay in *Mosses from an Old Manse* contains a charming picture of the idyllic life of the newly married pair. Perhaps no author was ever more happily married.

In Concord Hawthorne saw something of Emerson, Thoreau, and lesser Transcendentalists. One of Emerson's visitors, Margaret Fuller, Hawthorne came almost to hate. He could never be quite fair to her or to others of "the damned mob of scribbling women." He was more just to Emerson, although he could never share his wife's hero-worship of him. "Mr. Emerson," he wrote in his journal in 1842, "is a great searcher for facts; but they seem to melt away and become unsubstantial in his grasp." Emerson had a high regard for Hawthorne the man but considered his books "not good for anything." How could the mystic sage, who practically denied the existence of evil, care for the books of a romancer whose one subject was sin?

In 1846 Hawthorne's influential Democratic friends secured him a position as head of the Custom House in Salem. Again, he found it difficult to write while actively engaged in other things. He had already begun *The Scarlet Letter*—planned, however, as a rather long short story, not a novel. In 1849 a change of administration brought the loss of his position, much to his chagrin. Hawthorne was a good hater, and he wrote in his portrait of Judge Pyncheon in *The House of the Seven Gables* a scathing satire on the Rev. Charles W. Upham, who had been active in securing Hawthorne's removal. In *Nathaniel Hawthorne and His Wife*, Julian Hawthorne writes:

"On the day he received the news of his discharge, Hawthorne came home several hours earlier than usual; and when his wife expressed pleasure and surprise at his prompt reappearance, he called her attention to the fact that he had left his head behind him. 'Oh, then,' exclaimed Mrs. Hawthorne, buoyantly, 'you can write your book!' for Hawthorne had been bemoaning himself, for some time back, at not having leisure to write down a story that had long been weighing on his mind. He smiled, and remarked that it would be agreeable to know where their bread and rice were to come from while the story was writing. But his wife was equal to the occasion. Hawthorne had been in the habit of giving her, out of his salary, a weekly sum for household expenses; and out of this she had every week contrived secretly to save something, until now there was quite a large pile of gold [about \$150] in the drawer of her desk. This drawer she forthwith with elation opened, and triumphantly displayed to him the unsuspected treasure. So he began 'The Scarlet Letter' that afternoon; and blessed his stars, no doubt, for sending him such a wife."

In the transformation of Hawthorne the writer of none too popular short stories into Hawthorne the successful novelist, the Boston publisher, James T. Fields, played an important part,

which he later described in his *Yesterdays with Authors*. Thanks to Fields's sound judgment, *The Scarlet Letter*, when published in April, 1850, was a considerable popular success. The next year Hawthorne published *The House of the Seven Gables* and in 1852 *The Blithedale Romance*. Meanwhile he had left Salem for good. Soon after the publication of *The Scarlet Letter*, he had settled for a time at Lenox in the Berkshire Hills. He now saw a good deal of Herman Melville, who lived at Pittsfield near by. Owing to the preservation of certain letters from Melville (see I, p. 704), the younger author's reaction to the relation between the two is much clearer. It seems likely that something of Hawthorne's views of life and literature went into the making of *Moby-Dick*, which Melville was writing at the time and which he dedicated to Hawthorne. On August 29, 1850, Hawthorne wrote to Evert A. Duyckinck:

"I have read Melville's works with a progressive appreciation of the author. No writer ever put the reality before his reader more unflinchingly than he does in 'Redburn' and 'White Jacket.' 'Mardi' is a rich book, with depths here and there that compel a man to swim for his life. It is so good that one scarcely pardons the writer for not having brooded long over it so as to make it a great deal better."

On December 1, 1851, he wrote to Duyckinck concerning *Moby-Dick*: "What a book Melville has written! It gives me an idea of much greater power than his preceding ones."

When his old friend Franklin Pierce became a candidate for the Presidency, Hawthorne wrote a campaign biography—as Howells was to do for Lincoln in 1860—and was rewarded with an appointment in 1853 as United States Consul at Liverpool. He resigned this position in 1856 after he had saved some thirty thousand dollars from his salary and fees. He lived in Italy and England until 1860. Except for *The Marble Faun* (1860), this period of his life was not very productive, although *Our Old Home* (1863) and the French and Italian *Notebooks* make it easy to study his reaction to the new life he observed. Except for its novel background (Italy), *The Marble Faun* contains no very new theme. Perhaps Hawthorne saw Europe too late. Italian sculpture and painting interested him much; and, like many another American writer, he found that living in Europe had its advantages. In 1854 he wrote to Longfellow:

"Why don't you come over?—being now a man of leisure, and with nothing to keep you in America. If I were in your position, I think that I should make my home on this side of the water,—though always with an indefinite and never-to-be-executed intention to go back and die in my native land. America is a good land for young people, but not for those who are past their prime. It is impossible to grow old comfortably there, for nothing keeps you in countenance. . . . Everything is so delightfully sluggish here [England]! It is so pleasant to find people holding on to old ideas, and hardly now beginning to dream of matters that are already old with us. I have had enough of progress. Now I want to stand stock still, or rather to go back twenty years or so; and that is what I seem to have done in coming to England. Then, too, it is so agreeable to find one's self relieved from the tyranny of public opinion, or, at any rate, under the jurisdiction of quite a different public sentiment from what we have left behind us. A man of individuality and refinement can certainly live far more comfortably here—provided he has the means to live at all—than in New England. Be it owned, however, that I sometimes feel a tug at my very heartstrings when I think of my old home and friends."

In 1860 he returned to America and settled at the Wayside, in Concord, where he was living when Howells saw him on the occasion which he so memorably describes in his *Literary Friends*

AMERICAN RENAISSANCE ----- 1830-1870

and *Acquaintance*. The Civil War was fast approaching, but Hawthorne was not at first greatly moved by the events that led to it. He practically rebuked Emerson for saying that John Brown, if hanged, would "make the gallows glorious like the cross"; and added, "Nobody was ever more justly hanged." He had already written to his sister-in-law, Elizabeth Peabody: "I do assure you, that, like every other Abolitionist, you look at matters with an awful squint, which distorts everything within your line of vision . . ." When the Southern states began one by one to secede from the Union, he was not disposed to wish them back. "The States are too various and too extended to form really one country," he wrote to Bridge. "New England is quite as large a lump of earth as my heart can really take in." During the later years he worked on two romances which he left unfinished at his death in 1864. On May 24 Emerson wrote in his *Journals*:

"Yesterday, May 23, we buried Hawthorne in Sleepy Hollow, in a pomp of sunshine and verdure, and gentle winds. James Freeman Clarke read the service in the church and at the grave. Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes, Agassiz, Hoar, Dwight, Whipple, Norton, Alcott, Hillard, Fields, Judge Thomas, and I attended the hearse as pall-bearers. Franklin Pierce was with the family. The church was copiously decorated with white flowers delicately arranged. The corpse was unwillingly shown,—only a few moments to this company of his friends. But it was noble and serene in its aspect,—nothing amiss,—a calm and powerful forehead. A large company filled the church and the grounds of the cemetery. All was so bright and quiet that pain or mourning was hardly suggested, and Holmes said to me that it looked like a happy meeting.

"Clarke in the church said that Hawthorne had done more justice than any other to the shades of life, shown a sympathy with the crime in our nature, and, like Jesus, was the friend of sinners.

"I thought there was a tragic element in the event, that might be more fully rendered,—in the painful solitude of the man, which, I suppose, could not longer be endured, and he died of it.

"I have found in his death a surprise and disappointment. I thought him a greater man than any of his works betray, that there was still a great deal of work in him, and that he might one day show a purer power. Moreover, I have felt sure of him in his neighborhood, and in his necessities of sympathy and intelligence,—that I could well wait his time,—his unwillingness and caprice,—and might one day conquer a friendship. It would have been a happiness, doubtless to both of us, to have come into habits of unreserved intercourse. It was easy to talk to him,—there were no barriers,—only, he said so little, that I talked too much, and stopped only because, as he gave no indications, I feared to exceed. He showed no egotism or self-assertion, rather a humility, and, at one time, a fear that he had written himself out. One day, when I found him on the top of his hill, in the woods, he paced back the path to his house, and said, '*This path is the only remembrance of me that will remain.*' Now it appears that I waited too long."

The best biographies of Hawthorne are Julian Hawthorne, *Nathaniel Hawthorne and His Wife* (1884); Horatio Bridge, *Personal Recollections of Nathaniel Hawthorne* (1893); George E. Woodberry, *Nathaniel Hawthorne* (1902) in the American Men of Letters Series; Lloyd Morris, *The Rebellious Puritan: Portrait of Mr. Hawthorne* (1927); Newton Arvin, *Haw-*

thorne (1929); and Edward Mather, *Nathaniel Hawthorne: A Modest Man* (1941). Probably the two best are Woodberry's, which contains some excellent criticism, and Mather's, which is important for Hawthorne's life in England. Henry James's *Hawthorne* (1880), in the English Men of Letters Series, contains some excellent criticism, but as biography it is inadequate. See also Randall Stewart's important editions: *The American Notebooks by Nathaniel Hawthorne* (1932) and *The English Notebooks by Nathaniel Hawthorne* (1941). Austin Warren's *Nathaniel Hawthorne: Representative Selections* (1934), in the American Writers Series, contains an excellent introductory essay and a useful bibliography. Perhaps the best critical essay is that contained in W. C. Brownell, *American Prose Masters* (1909). Other important materials are: F. O. Matthiessen, *American Renaissance* (1941); Leland Schubert, *Hawthorne the Artist* (1944); Lawrence S. Hall, *Hawthorne: Critic of Society* (1944); and John C. Gerber, "Form and Content in *The Scarlet Letter*," *New England Quarterly*, XVII, 25-55 (March, 1944). Further references are given in Lewis Leary (ed.), *Articles on American Literature . . .* (1947).¹

¹ Since this paragraph was written, Randall Stewart has published (1948) a life of Hawthorne which surpasses all its predecessors.

[Hawthorne in 1860]

from LITERARY FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCE* (1900)

WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS
(1837-1920)

I wasted that whole evening and the next morning in fond delaying, and it was not until after the indifferent dinner I got at the tavern where I stopped, that I found courage to go and present Lowell's letter¹ to Hawthorne. I would almost have forgone meeting the weird genius only to have kept that letter, for it said certain infinitely precious things of me with such a sweetness, such a grace as Lowell alone could give his praise. Years afterwards, when Hawthorne was dead, I met Mrs. Hawthorne, and told her of the pang I had in parting with it, and she sent it me, doubly enriched by Hawthorne's keeping. But now if I were to see him at all I must give up my letter, and I carried it in my hand to the door of the cottage he called The Wayside. It was never otherwise than a very modest place, but the modesty was greater than

than to-day, and there was already some preliminary carpentry at one end of the cottage, which I saw was to result in an addition to it. I recall pleasant fields across the road before it; behind rose a hill wooded with low pines, such as is made in *Septimius Felton* the scene of the involuntary duel between Septimius and the young British officer. I have a sense of the woods coming quite down to the house, but if this was so I do not know what to do with a grassy slope which seems to have stretched part way up the hill. As I approached, I looked for the tower which the author was fabled to climb into at sight of the coming guest, and pull the ladder up after him; and I wondered whether he would fly before me in that sort, or imagine some easier means of escaping me.

The door was opened to my ring by a tall handsome boy whom I suppose to have been Mr. Julian Hawthorne; and the next moment I found myself in the presence of the romancer, who entered from some room beyond. He advanced carrying his head with a heavy forward droop, and with a pace for which I decided that the word would be *pondering*. It was the pace of a bulky man of fifty, and his head was that beautiful head we all know from the many pictures of it. But Hawthorne's *look* was dif-

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¹ See p. 583 for Lowell's letter.

ferent from that of any picture of him that I have seen. It was sombre and brooding, as the look of a man who had dealt faithfully and therefore sorrowfully with that problem of evil which forever attracted, forever evaded Hawthorne. It was by no means troubled, it was full of a dark repose. Others who knew him better and saw him oftener were familiar with other aspects, and I remember that one night at Longfellow's table, when one of the guests happened to speak of the photograph of Hawthorne which hung in a corner of the room, Lowell said, after a glance at it, "Yes, it's good; but it hasn't his fine *accipitral* look."

In the face that confronted me, however, there was nothing of keen alertness, but only a sort of quiet, patient intelligence, for which I seek the right word in vain. It was a very regular face, with beautiful eyes; the mustache, still entirely dark, was dense over the fine mouth. Hawthorne was dressed in black, and he had a certain effect which I remember, of seeming to have on a black cravat with no visible collar. He was such a man that if I had ignorantly met him anywhere I should have instantly felt him to be a personage.

I must have given him the letter myself, for I have no recollection of parting with it before, but I only remember his offering me his hand, and making me shyly and tentatively welcome. After a few moments of the demoralization which followed his hospitable attempts in me, he asked if I would not like to go up on his hill with him and sit there, where he smoked in the afternoon. He offered me a cigar, and when I said that I did not smoke, he lighted it for himself, and we climbed the hill together. At the top, where there was an outlook in the pines over the Concord meadows, we found a log, and he invited me to a place on it beside him, and at intervals of a minute or so he talked while he smoked. Heaven preserved me from the folly of trying to tell him how much his books had been to me, and though we got on rapidly at no time, I think we got on better for this interposition. He asked me about Lowell, I dare say, for I told him of my joy in meeting him and Doctor Holmes, and this seemed greatly to interest him. Perhaps because he was so lately from Europe, where our great men are always seen through the wrong end of the telescope, he appeared surprised at my devo-

tion, and asked me whether I cared as much for meeting them as I should care for meeting the famous English authors. I professed that I cared much more, though whether this was true, I now have my doubts, and I think Hawthorne doubted it at the time. But he said nothing in comment, and went on to speak generally of Europe and America. He was curious about the West, which he seemed to fancy much more purely American, and said he would like to see some part of the country on which the shadow (or, if I must be precise, the damned shadow) of Europe had not fallen. I told him I thought the West must finally be characterized by the Germans, whom we had in great numbers, and, purely from my zeal for German poetry, I tried to allege some proofs of their present influence, though I could think of none outside of politics, which I thought they affected wholesomely. I knew Hawthorne was a Democrat, and I felt it well to touch politics lightly, but he had no more to say about the fateful election² then pending than Holmes or Lowell had.

With the abrupt transition of his talk throughout, he began somehow to speak of women, and said he had never seen a woman whom he thought quite beautiful. In the same way he spoke of the New England temperament, and suggested that the apparent coldness in it was also real, and that the suppression of emotion for generations would extinguish it at last. Then he questioned me as to my knowledge of Concord, and whether I had seen any of the notable people. I answered that I had met no one but himself, as yet, but I very much wished to see Emerson and Thoreau. I did not think it needful to say that I wished to see Thoreau quite as much because he had suffered in the cause of John Brown as because he had written the books which had taken me; and when he said that Thoreau prided himself on coming nearer the heart of a pine-tree than any other human being, I could say honestly enough that I would rather come near the heart of a man. This visibly pleased him, and I saw that it did not displease him, when he asked whether I was not going to see his next neighbor Mr. Alcott, and I confessed that I had never heard of him. That surprised as well as pleased him; he remarked, with whatever intention, that there was nothing like recognition to make a man modest; and

² The presidential election of 1860.

he entered into some account of the philosopher, whom I suppose I need not be much ashamed of not knowing then, since his influence was of the immediate sort that makes a man important to his townsmen while he is still strange to his countrymen.

Hawthorne descanted a little upon the landscape, and said certain of the pleasant fields below us belonged to him, but he preferred his hill-top, and if he could have his way those arable fields should be grown up to pines too. He smoked fitfully, and slowly, and in the hour that we spent together, his whiffs were of the desultory and unfinal character of his words. When we went down, he asked me into his house again, and would have me stay to tea, for which we found the table laid. But there was a great deal of silence in it all, and at times, in spite of his shadowy kindness, I felt my spirits sink. After tea, he showed me a bookcase, where there were a few books toppling about on the half-filled shelves, and said, coldly, "This is my library." I knew that men were his books, and though I myself cared for books so much, I found it fit and fine that he should care so little, or seem to care so little. Some of his own romances were among the volumes on these shelves, and when I put my finger on the *Blithedale Romance* and said that I preferred that to the others, his face lighted up, and he said that he believed the Germans liked that best too.

Upon the whole we parted such good friends that when I offered to take leave he asked me how long I was to be in Concord, and not only bade me come to see him again, but said he would give me a card to Emerson, if I liked. I answered, of course, that I should like it beyond all things; and he wrote on the back of his card something which I found, when I got away, to be, "I find this young man worthy." The quaintness, the little stiffness of it, if one pleases to call it so, was amusing to one who was not without his sense of humor, but the kindness filled me to the throat with joy. In fact, I entirely liked Hawthorne. He had been as cordial as so shy a man could show himself; and I perceived, with the repose that nothing else can give, the entire sincerity of his soul.

Nothing could have been further from the behavior of this very great man than any sort of posing, apparently, or a wish to affect me with a sense of his greatness. I saw that he was

as much abashed by our encounter as I was; he was visibly shy to the point of discomfort, but in no ignoble sense was he conscious, and as nearly as he could with one so much his younger he made an absolute equality between us. My memory of him is without alloy one of the finest pleasures of my life. - - -

10 from PASSAGES FROM THE AMERICAN NOTE-BOOKS (1868)

[Brook Farm]

(1841)

15 After Hawthorne's death, Mrs. Hawthorne compiled *Passages from the American Note-Books* (1868) from his notebooks and his letters to her. The account of his stay at Brook Farm does not appear in Randall Stewart's more carefully edited *The American Notebooks by Nathaniel Hawthorne Based upon the Original Manuscripts in the Pierpont Morgan Library* (1932). Mrs. Hawthorne's omissions are indicated by three dots (. . .), the present editor's by (- - -). The best account of the Brook Farm community is Lindsay Swift, *Brook Farm* (1900). See also Marianne Dwight, *Letters from Brook Farm, 1844-1847* (1928). The aims of the founders recall the Pantisocracy dreams of Coleridge and Southey. These aims are explained in a letter written by George Ripley, the moving spirit in the enterprise, dated November 9, 1840.

20 "Our objects, as you know, are to insure a more natural union between intellectual and manual labor than now exists; to combine the thinker and the worker, as far as possible, in the same individual; to guarantee the highest possible mental freedom, by providing all with labor, adapted to their tastes and talents, and securing to them the fruits of their industry; to do away the necessity of menial services, by opening the benefits of education and the profits of labor to all; and thus to prepare a society of liberal, intelligent, and cultivated persons, whose relations with each other would permit a more simple and wholesome life, than can be led amidst the pressure of our competitive institutions."

25 BROOK FARM, OAK HILL, April 13, 1841.— . . . Here I am in a polar Paradise! I know not how to interpret this aspect of nature,—whether it be of good or evil omen to our enterprise. But I reflect that the Plymouth pilgrims arrived in the midst of storm, and stepped ashore upon mountain snow-drifts; and, nevertheless, they prospered, and became a great people,—and doubtless it will be the same with us. I laud my

stars, however, that you will not have your first impressions of (perhaps) our future home from such a day as this. . . . Through faith, I persist in believing that Spring and Summer will come in their due season, but the unregenerated man shivers within me, and suggests a doubt whether I may not have wandered within the precincts of the Arctic Circle, and chosen my heritage among everlasting snows. . . . Provide yourself with a good stock of furs, and, if you can obtain the skin of a polar bear, you will find it a very suitable summer dress for this region . . .

I have not yet taken my first lesson in agriculture, except that I went to see our cows foddered, yesterday afternoon. We have eight of our own; and the number is now increased by a transcendental heifer belonging to Miss Margaret Fuller. She is very fractious, I believe, and apt to kick over the milk-pail. . . . I intend to convert myself into a milkmaid this evening, but I pray Heaven that Mr. Ripley may be moved to assign me the kindest cow in the herd, otherwise I shall perform my duty with fear and trembling.

I like my brethren in affliction very well; and, could you see us sitting round our table at meal times, before the great kitchen fire, you would call it a cheerful sight. Mrs. B— is a most comfortable woman to behold. She looks as if her ample bosom were stuffed full of tenderness,—indeed, as if she were all one great, kind heart. . . .

April 14, 10 A.M.— . . . I did not milk the cows last night, because Mr. Ripley was afraid to trust them to my hands, or me to their horns, I know not which. But this morning I have done wonders. Before breakfast, I went out to the barn and began to chop hay for the cattle, and with such "righteous vehemence," as Mr. Ripley says, did I labor, that in the space of ten minutes I broke the machine. Then I brought wood and replenished the fires; and finally went down to breakfast, and ate up a huge mound of buckwheat cakes. After breakfast, Mr. Ripley put a four-pronged instrument into my hands, which he gave me to understand was called a pitchfork; and he and Mr. Farley being armed with similar weapons, we all three commenced a gallant attack upon a heap of manure. This office being concluded, and I having purified myself, I sit down to finish this letter. . . .

Miss Fuller's cow hooks the other cows, and has made herself ruler of the herd, and behaves in a very tyrannical manner. . . . I shall make an excellent husbandman,—I feel the original Adam reviving within me.

April 16 — - -

I have milked a cow!!! . . . The herd has rebelled against the usurpation of Miss Fuller's heifer; and, whenever they are turned out of the barn, she is compelled to take refuge under our protection. So much did she impede my labors by keeping close to me, that I found it necessary to give her two or three gentle pats with a shovel; but still she preferred to trust herself to my tender mercies, rather than venture among the horns of the herd. She is not an amiable cow, but she has a very intelligent face, and seems to be of a reflective cast of character. I doubt not that she will soon perceive the expediency of being on good terms with the rest of the sisterhood.

I have not yet been twenty yards from our house and barn; but I begin to perceive that this is a beautiful place. The scenery is of a mild and placid character, with nothing bold in its aspect; but I think its beauties will grow upon us, and make us love it the more, the longer we live here. There is a brook, so near the house that we shall be able to hear its ripple in the summer evenings, . . . but, for agricultural purposes, it has been made to flow in a straight and rectangular fashion, which does it infinite damage as a picturesque object. - - -

April 22.— . . . What an abominable hand do I scribble! but I have been chopping wood and turning a grindstone all the forenoon; and such occupations are likely to disturb the equilibrium of the muscles and sinews. It is an endless surprise to me how much work there is to be done in the world; but, thank God, I am able to do my share of it,—and my ability increases daily. What a great, broad-shouldered, elephantine personage I shall become by and by! - - -

May 4.— . . . My cold no longer troubles me, and all the morning I have been at work under the clear, blue sky, on a hillside. Sometimes it almost seemed as if I were at work in the sky itself, though the material in which I wrought

was the ore from our gold-mine.¹ Nevertheless, there is nothing so unseemly and disagreeable in this sort of toil as you could think. It defiles the hands, indeed, but not the soul. This gold ore is pure and wholesome substance, else our mother Nature would not devour it so readily, and derive so much nourishment from it, and return such a rich abundance of good grain and roots in requital of it.

The farm is growing very beautiful now,—not that we yet see anything of the peas and potatoes which we have planted; but the grass blushes green on the slopes and hollows. I wrote that word “blush” almost unconsciously; so we will let it go as an inspired utterance. When I go forth afield, . . . I look beneath the stone walls, where the verdure is richest, in hopes that a little company of violets, or some solitary bud, prophetic of the summer, may be there. . . . But not a wild flower have I yet found. - - -

I do not believe that I should be patient here if I were not engaged in a righteous and heaven-blessed way of life. When I was in the Custom-House and then at Salem I was not half so patient. . . .

We had some tableaux last evening, the principal characters being sustained by Mr. Farley and Miss Ellen Slade. They went off very well. . . .

I fear it is time for me—sod-compelling as I am—to take the field again.

May 11.— . . . This morning I arose at milking time in good trim for work; and we have been employed partly in an Augean labor of clearing out a wood-shed, and partly in carting loads of oak. This afternoon I hope to have something to do in the field, for these jobs about the house are not at all to my taste.

June 1.— . . . I have been too busy to write a long letter by this opportunity, for I think this present life of mine gives me an antipathy to pen and ink, even more than my Custom-House experience did. . . . In the midst of toil, or after a hard day's work in the gold-mine, my soul obstinately refuses to be poured out on paper. That abominable gold-mine! Thank God, we anticipate getting rid of its treasures in the course of two or three days! Of all hateful places that is the worst, and I shall never comfort myself for having spent so many days of blessed sunshine

¹ The manure pile.

there. It is my opinion that a man's soul may be buried and perish under a dung-heap, or in a furrow of the field, just as well as under a pile of money. - - -

August 12.— . . . I am very well, and not at all weary, for yesterday's rain gave us a holiday, and, moreover, the labors of the farm are not so pressing as they have been. And, joyful thought! in a little more than a fortnight I shall be free from my bondage,— . . . free to enjoy Nature,—free to think and feel! . . . Even my Custom-House experience was not such a thralldom and weariness; my mind and heart were free. Oh, labor is the curse of the world, and nobody can meddle with it without becoming proportionately brutified! Is it a praiseworthy matter that I have spent five golden months in providing food for cows and horses? It is not so.

August 18.—I am very well, only somewhat tired with walking half a dozen miles immediately after breakfast, and raking hay ever since. We shall quite finish haying this week, and then there will be no more very hard or constant labor during the one other week I shall remain a slave.

August 22.— - - - Since I last wrote, we have done haying, and the remainder of my bondage will probably be light. It will be a long time, however, before I shall know how to make a good use of leisure, either as regards enjoyment or literary occupation. . . .

It is extremely doubtful whether Mr. Ripley will succeed in locating his community on this farm. He can bring Mr. E— to no terms, and the more they talk about the matter, the further they appear to be from a settlement. We must form other plans for ourselves; for I can see few or no signs that Providence purposes to give us a home here. I am weary, weary, thrice weary, of waiting so many ages. Whatever may be my gifts, I have not hitherto shown a single one that may avail to gather gold. I confess that I have strong hopes of good from this arrangement with M—; but when I look at the scanty avails of my past literary efforts, I do not feel authorized to expect much from the future. Well, we shall see. Other persons have bought large estates and built splendid mansions with such little books as I mean to write; so that per-

haps it is not unreasonable to hope that mine may enable me to build a little cottage, or, at least to buy or hire one. But I am becoming more and more convinced that we must not lean upon this community. Whatever is to be done must be done by my own undivided strength. I shall not remain here through the winter, unless with an absolute certainty that there will be a house ready for us in the spring. Otherwise, I shall return to Boston,—still, however, considering myself an associate of the community, so that we may take advantage of any more favorable aspect of affairs. How much depends on these little books! Methinks if anything could draw out my whole strength, it would be the motives that now press upon me. Yet, after all, I must keep these considerations out of my mind, because an external pressure always disturbs instead of assisting me.

SALFm, *September 3*—. . . But really I should judge it to be twenty years since I left Brook Farm, and I take this to be one proof that my life there was an unnatural and unsuitable, and therefore an unreal, one. It already looks like a dream behind me. The real Me was never an associate of the community; there has been a spectral Appearance there, sounding the horn at day break, and milking the cows, and hoeing potatoes, and raking hay, toiling in the sun, and doing me the honor to assume my name. But this spectre was not myself. Nevertheless, it is somewhat remarkable that my hands have, during the past summer, grown very brown and rough, insomuch that many people persist in believing that I, after all, was the aforesaid spectral horn-sounder, cow-milker, potato-hoer, and hay-raker. But such people do not know a reality from a shadow. Enough of nonsense. I know not exactly how soon I shall return to the farm. Perhaps not sooner than a fortnight from tomorrow.

BROOK FARM, *September 22, 1841*.— . . . Here I am again, slowly adapting myself to the life of this queer community, whence I seem to have been absent half a lifetime,—so utterly have I grown apart from the spirit and manners of the place. . . . I was most kindly received; and the fields and woods looked very pleasant in the bright sunshine of the day before yesterday. I have a friendlier disposition towards the farm, now that I am no longer obliged to toil in its

stubborn furrows.² Yesterday and to-day, however, the weather has been intolerable,—cold, chill, sullen, so that it is impossible to be on kindly terms with Mother Nature. . . .

5 I doubt whether I shall succeed in writing another volume of Grandfather's Library while I remain here. I have not the sense of perfect seclusion which has always been essential to my power of producing anything. It is true, nobody intrudes into my room, but still I cannot be quiet. Nothing here is settled; everything is but beginning to arrange itself, and though I would seem to have little to do with aught beside my own thoughts, still I cannot but partake of the ferment around me. My mind will not be abstracted. I must observe, and think, and feel, and content myself with catching glimpses of things which may be wrought out hereafter. Perhaps it will be quite as well that I find myself 15 unable to set seriously about literary occupation for the present. It will be good to have a longer interval between my labor of the body and that of the mind. I shall work to the better purpose after the beginning of November. 20 Meantime I shall see these people and their enterprise under a new point of view, and perhaps be able to determine whether we have any call to cast in our lot among them. - - -

30 *September 25*.— . . . One thing is certain. I cannot and will not spend the winter here. The time would be absolutely thrown away so far as regards any literary labor to be performed. - - -

35 *September 27*.— - - -

I was elected to two high offices last night,—viz. to be a trustee of the Brook Farm estate, and Chairman of the Committee of Finance! . . . From the nature of my office, I shall have the chief direction of all the money affairs of the community, the making of bargains, the supervision of receipts and expenditures, etc., etc., etc. . . .

45 My accession to these august offices does not at all decide the question of my remaining here permanently. I told Mr. Ripley that I could not spend the winter at the farm, and that it was quite uncertain whether I returned in the spring. - - -

2 Hawthorne had returned to Brook Farm as a boarder.

September 28—A picnic party in the woods, yesterday, in honor of little Frank Dana's birthday, he being six years old. I strolled out, after dinner, with Mr. Bradford, and in a lonesome glade we met the apparition of an Indian chief, dressed in appropriate costume of blanket, feathers, and paint, and armed with a musket. Almost at the same time, a young gypsy fortune-teller came from among the trees, and proposed to tell my fortune. While she was doing this, the goddess Diana let fly an arrow, and hit me smartly in the hand. The fortune-teller and goddess were in fine contrast, Diana being a blonde, fair, quiet, with a moderate composure; and the gypsy (O.G.) a bright, vivacious, dark-haired, rich-complexioned damsel,—both of them very pretty, at least pretty enough to make fifteen years enchanting. Accompanied by these denizens of the wild wood, we went onward, and came to a company of fantastic figures, arranged in a ring for a dance or a game. There was a Swiss girl, an Indian squaw, a negro of the Jim Crow order, one or two foresters, and several people in Christian attire, besides children of all ages. Then followed childish games, in which the grown people took part with mirth enough,—while I, whose nature it is to be a mere spectator both of sport and serious business, lay under the trees and looked on. Meanwhile, Mr. Emerson and Miss Fuller,³ who arrived an hour or two before, came forth into the little glade where we were assembled. Here followed much talk. The ceremonies of the day concluded with a cold collation of cakes and fruit. All was pleasant enough,—an excellent piece of work,—“would 't were done!” It has left a fantastic impression on my memory, this intermingling of wild and fabulous characters with real and homely ones, in the secluded nook of the woods. I remember them, with the sunlight breaking through overshadowing branches, and they appearing and disappearing confusedly,—perhaps starting out of the earth; as if the everyday laws of nature were suspended for this particular occasion. There were the children, too, laughing and sporting about, as if they were at home among such strange shapes,—and anon bursting into loud uproar of lamentation, when the rude gambols of the merry archers chanced to overturn them. And apart, with a shrewd, Yankee ob-

servation of the scene, stands our friend Orange, a thick-set, sturdy figure, enjoying the fun well enough, yet rather laughing with a perception of its nonsensicalness than at all entering into the spirit of the thing. - - -

[Hints for Stories]

For Hawthorne, as the following extracts from his notebooks suggest, the germ of a story was often either something that could be used as a symbol or a psychological problem involving a moral question. In a sense all his stories are psychological studies of the effects of sin, and almost invariably he employs a symbol which emphasizes the theme of the story.

A sketch to be given of a modern reformer,—a type of the extreme doctrines on the subject of slaves, cold water, and other such topics. He goes about the streets haranguing most eloquently, and is on the point of making many converts, when his labors are suddenly interrupted by the keeper of a madhouse, whence he has escaped. Much may be made of this idea.

The scene of a story or sketch to be laid within the light of a street-lantern, the time, when the lamp is near going out; and the catastrophe to be simultaneous with the last flickering gleam

Cannon transformed to church-bells.

To make one's own reflection in a mirror the subject of a story¹

A person to be writing a tale, and to find that it shapes itself against his intentions; that the characters act otherwise than he thought; that unforeseen events occur; and a catastrophe comes which he strives in vain to avert. It might shadow forth his own fate,—he having made himself one of the personages.

The race of mankind to be swept away, leaving all their cities and works. Then another human pair to be placed in the world, with native intelligence like Adam and Eve, but knowing nothing of their predecessors or of their own nature and destiny. They, perhaps, to be described as working out this knowledge by their

³ Neither Emerson nor Margaret Fuller ever lived at Brook Farm.

¹ Cf. “Monsieur du Miroir.”

sympathy with what they saw, and by their own feelings.²

A snake, taken into a man's stomach and nourished there from fifteen years to thirty-five tormenting him most horribly. A type of envy or some other evil passion.³

Men of cold passions have quick eyes.

Punishment of a miser,—to pay the drafts of his heir in his tomb.

A person to catch fireflies, and try to kindle his household fire with them. It would be symbolical of something.

The semblance of a human face to be formed on the side of a mountain, or in the fracture of a small stone, by a *lusus naturæ*. The face is an object of curiosity for years or centuries, and by and by a boy is born, whose features gradually assume the aspect of that portrait. At some critical juncture, the resemblance is found perfect. A prophecy may be connected.⁴

To trace out the influence of a frightful and disgraceful crime in debasing and destroying a character naturally high and noble, the guilty person alone being conscious of the crime.⁵

The print in blood of a naked foot to be traced through the street of a town.⁶

[Thoreau]*

Hawthorne became acquainted with Thoreau while living at Concord. Compare the following sentence in a letter from Hawthorne to Longfellow, November 21, 1848: "You would find him [Thoreau] well worth knowing; he is a man of thought and originality, with a certain iron-pokerishness, an uncompromising stiffness in his mental character which

is interesting, though it grows rather wearisome on close and frequent acquaintance."

Sept. 1st. Thursday [1842]

MR THOROW [*sic*] dined with us yesterday
5 He is a singular character—a young man with much of wild original nature still remaining in him; and so far as he is sophisticated, it is in a way and method of his own. He is as ugly as sin, long-nosed, queer-mouthed, and with uncouth and somewhat rustic, although courteous manners, corresponding very well with such an exterior. But his ugliness is of an honest and agreeable fashion, and becomes him much better than beauty. He was educated, I believe, at Cambridge, and formerly kept school in this town [Concord]; but for two or three years back, he has repudiated all regular modes of getting a living, and seems inclined to lead a sort of Indian life among civilized men—an Indian life, I mean, as respects the absence of any systematic effort for a livelihood. He has been for sometime an intimate of Mr. Emerson's family; and, in requital, he labors in the garden, and performs such other offices as may suit him—being
15 entertained by Mr. Emerson for the sake of what true manhood there is in him. Mr. Thorow [*sic*] is a keen and delicate observer of nature—a genuine observer, which, I suspect, is almost as rare a character as even an original poet; and
20 Nature, in return for his love, seems to adopt him as her special child, and shows him secrets which few others are allowed to witness. He is familiar with beast, fish, fowl, and reptile, and has strange stories to tell of adventures, and
25 friendly passages with these lower brethren of mortality. Herb and flower, likewise, wherever they grow, whether in garden, or wild wood, are his familiar friends. He is also on intimate terms with the clouds, and can tell the portents of storms. It is a characteristic trait, that he has a great regard for the memory of the Indian tribes, whose wild life would have suited him so well; and strange to say, he seldom walks over a ploughed field without picking up an arrow-point, a spearhead, or other relic of the red men
30 —as if their spirits willed him to be the inheritor of their simple wealth.

With all this he has more than a tincture of literature—a deep and true taste for poetry, especially the elder poets, although more exclusive than is desirable, like all other Transcendental-

² Cf. "The New Adam and Eve."

³ Cf. "The Bosom Serpent."

⁴ Cf. "The Great Stone Face."

⁵ Cf. *The Scarlet Letter*.

⁶ Cf. Hawthorne's unfinished romances: *The Ancestral Footstep* and *Dr. Grimshawe's Secret*.

* Reprinted from Randall Stewart (ed.), *The American Notebooks by Nathaniel Hawthorne* (1932) by permission of the publishers, the Yale University Press.

ists, so far as I am acquainted with them. He is a good writer—at least, he has written one good article, a rambling disquisition¹ on Natural History in the last *Dial*,—which, he says, was chiefly made up from journals of his own observations. Methinks this article gives a very fair image of his mind and character—so true, minute, and literal in observation, yet giving the spirit as well as letter of what he sees, even as a lake reflects its wooded banks, showing every leaf, yet giving the wild beauty of the whole scene;—then there are passages in the article of cloudy and dreamy metaphysics, partly affected, and partly the natural exhalations of his intellect;—and also passages where his thoughts seem to measure and attune themselves into spontaneous verse, as they rightfully may, since there is real poetry in him. There is a basis of good sense and moral truth, too, throughout the article, which also is a reflection of his character, for he is not unwise to think and feel, however imperfect in his own mode of action. On the whole, I find him a healthy and wholesome man to know. - - -

[Lincoln in 1862]

(1862; 1872)

Hawthorne gave his impressions of Lincoln in an article, "Chiefly about War-Matters," which was published in part in the *Atlantic Monthly* for July, 1862. The editor, James T. Fields, thought it unwise to print Hawthorne's too frank description of the President. In his *Yesterdays with Authors* (1872) Fields printed the omitted passage along with the following introductory paragraph:

"After his return home from Washington Hawthorne sent to me, during the month of May [1862], an article for the *Atlantic Monthly*, which he entitled 'Chiefly about War-Matters.' The paper, excellently well done throughout, of course, contained a personal description of President Lincoln, which I thought, considered as a portrait of a living man, and drawn by Hawthorne, it would not be wise or tasteful to print. The office of an editor is a disagreeable one sometimes, and the case of Hawthorne on Lincoln disturbed me not a little. After reading the manuscript, I wrote to the author, and asked his permission to omit his description of the President's personal appearance. As usual—for he was the kindest and sweetest of contributors, the most

good-natured and the most amenable man to advise I ever knew,—he consented to my proposal, and allowed me to print the article with the alterations. If any one will turn to the paper in the *Atlantic Monthly* (it is in the number for July, 1862), it will be observed there are several notes, all of these were written by Hawthorne himself. He complied with my request without a murmur, but he always thought I was wrong in my decision. He said the whole description of the interview and the President's personal appearance were, to his mind, the only parts of the article worth publishing. 'What a terrible thing,' he complained, 'it is to try to let off a little bit of truth into this miserable humbug of a world!' President Lincoln is dead, and as Hawthorne once wrote to me, 'Upon my honor, it seems to me the passage omitted has an historical value,' I will copy here verbatim what I advised my friend, both on his own account and the President's, not to print nine years ago. Hawthorne and his party had gone into the President's room, annexed, as he says, as supernumeraries to a deputation from a Massachusetts whip-factory, with a present of a splendid whip to the Chief Magistrate:—"

By and by there was a little stir on the staircase and in the passage-way, and in lounged a tall, loose-jointed figure, of an exaggerated Yankee port and demeanor, whom (as being about the homeliest man I ever saw, yet by no means repulsive or disagreeable) it was impossible not to recognize him as Uncle Abe.

Unquestionably, Western man though he be, and Kentuckian by birth, President Lincoln is the essential representative of all Yankees, and the veritable specimen, physically, of what the world seems determined to regard as our characteristic qualities. It is the strangest and yet the fittest thing in the jumble of human vicissitudes, that he, out of so many millions, unlooked for, unselected by any intelligible process that could be based upon his genuine qualities, unknown to those who chose him, and unsuspected of what endowments may adapt him for his tremendous responsibility, should have found the way open for him to fling his lank personality into the chair of state,—where, I presume, it was his first impulse to throw his legs on the council-table, and tell the Cabinet Ministers a story. There is no describing his lengthy awkwardness, nor the uncouthness of his movement; and yet it seemed as if I had been in the habit of seeing him daily, and had shaken hands with

¹ "Natural History of Massachusetts," *Dial*, III, 19-40 (July, 1842).

him a thousand times in some village street; so true was he to the aspect of the pattern American, though with a certain extravagance which, possibly, I exaggerated still further by the delighted eagerness with which I took it in. If put to guess his calling and livelihood, I should have taken him for a country schoolmaster as soon as anything else. He was dressed in a rusty black frock-coat and pantaloons, unbrushed, and worn so faithfully that the suit had adapted itself to the curves and angularities of his figure, and had grown to be an outer skin of the man. He had shabby slippers on his feet. His hair was black, still unmixed with gray, stiff, somewhat bushy, and had apparently been acquainted with neither brush nor comb that morning, after the disarrangement of the pillow; and as to a night-cap, Uncle Abe proudly knows nothing of such effeminacies. His complexion is dark and sallow, betokening, I fear, an insalubrious atmosphere around the White House; he has thick, black eyebrows and an impending brow; his nose is large, and the lines about his mouth are very strongly defined.

The whole physiognomy is as coarse a one as you would meet anywhere in the length and breadth of the States; but, withal, it is redeemed, illuminated, softened, and brightened by a kindly though serious look out of his eyes, and an expression of homely sagacity, that seems weighted with rich results of village experience. A great deal of native sense; no bookish cultivation, no refinement; honest at heart, and thoroughly so, and yet, in some sort, sly,—at least, endowed with a sort of tact and wisdom that are akin to craft, and would impel him, I think, to take an antagonist in flank, rather than to make a bull-run at him right in front. But, on the whole, I liked this sallow, queer, sagacious visage, with the homely human sympathies that warmed it; and, for my small share in the matter, would as lief have Uncle Abe for a ruler as any man whom it would have been practicable to put in his place.

Immediately on his entrance the President accosted our member of Congress, who had us in charge, and, with a comical twist of his face, made some jocular remark about the length of his breakfast. He then greeted us all round, not waiting for an introduction, but shaking and squeezing everybody's hand with the utmost cordiality, whether the individual's name was an-

nounced to him or not. His manner towards us was wholly without pretence, but yet had a kind of natural dignity, quite sufficient to keep the forwardest of us from clapping him on the shoulder and asking for a story. A mutual acquaintance being established, our leader took the whip out of its case, and began to read the address of presentation. The whip was an exceedingly long one, its handle being wrought in ivory (by some artist in the Massachusetts State Prison, I believe), and ornamented with a medallion of the President, and other equally beautiful devices; and along its whole length there was a succession of golden bands and ferrules. The address was shorter than the whip, but equally well made, consising chiefly of an explanatory description of these artistic designs, and closing with a hint that the gift was a suggestive and emblematic one, and that the President would recognize the use to which such an instrument should be put.

This suggestion gave Uncle Abe rather a delicate task in his reply, because, slight as the matter seemed, it apparently called for some declaration, or intimation, or faint foreshadowing of policy in reference to the conduct of the war, and the final treatment of the Rebels. But the President's Yankee aptness and not-to-be-caughtness stood him in good stead, and he jerked and wiggled himself out of the dilemma with an uncouth dexterity that was entirely in character; although, without his gesticulation of eye and mouth,—and especially the flourish of the whip, with which he imagined himself touching up a pair of fat horses,—I doubt whether his words would be worth recording, even if I could remember them. The gist of the reply was, that he accepted the whip as an emblem of peace, not punishment; and, this great affair over, we retired out of the presence in high good-humor, only regretting that we could not have seen the President sit down and fold up his legs (which is said to be a most extraordinary spectacle), or have heard him tell one of those delectable stories for which he is so celebrated. A good many of them are afloat upon the common talk of Washington, and are certainly the aptest, pithiest, and funniest little things imaginable; though, to be sure, they smack of the frontier freedom, and would not always bear repetition in a drawing-room, or on the immaculate page of the Atlantic.

PREFACE TO THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES

(1851)

Hawthorne's prefaces, some of which reveal him as an excellent critic of his own work, suggest the difficulties of a romancer writing in a period when realism was coming into fashion, especially in France and England.

When a writer calls his work a Romance, it need hardly be observed that he wishes to claim a certain latitude, both as to its fashion and material, which he would not have felt himself entitled to assume had he professed to be writing a Novel. The latter form of composition is presumed to aim at a very minute fidelity, not merely to the possible, but to the probable and ordinary course of man's experience. The former—while, as a work of art, it must rigidly subject itself to laws, and while it sins unpardonably so far as it may swerve aside from the truth of the human heart—has fairly a right to present that truth under circumstances, to a great extent, of the writer's own choosing or creation. If he think fit, also, he may so manage his atmospherical medium as to bring out or mellow the lights and deepen and enrich the shadows of the picture. He will be wise, no doubt, to make a very moderate use of the privileges here stated, and, especially, to mingle the marvellous rather as a slight, delicate, and evanescent flavor, than as any portion of the actual substance of the dish offered to the public. He can hardly be said, however, to commit a literary crime even if he disregard this caution.

In the present work, the author has proposed to himself—but with what success, fortunately, it is not for him to judge—to keep undeviatingly within his immunities. The point of view in which this tale comes under the Romantic definition lies in the attempt to connect a bygone time with the very present that is flitting away from us. It is a legend prolonging itself, from an epoch now gray in the distance, down into our own broad daylight, and bringing along with it some of its legendary mist, which the reader, according to his pleasure, may either disregard, or allow it to float almost imperceptibly about the characters and events for the sake of a picturesque effect. The narrative, it may be, is woven of so humble a texture as to require this

advantage, and, at the same time, to render it the more difficult of attainment.

Many writers lay very great stress upon some definite moral purpose, at which they profess to aim their works. Not to be deficient in this particular, the author has provided himself with a moral,—the truth, namely, that the wrongdoing of one generation lives into the successive ones, and, divesting itself of every temporary advantage, becomes a pure and uncontrollable mischief, and he would feel it a singular gratification if this romance might effectually convince mankind,—or, indeed, any one man,—of the folly of tumbling down an avalanche of ill-gotten gold, or real estate, on the heads of an unfortunate posterity, thereby to maim and crush them, until the accumulated mass shall be scattered abroad in its original atoms. In good faith, however, he is not sufficiently imaginative to flatter himself with the slightest hope of this kind. When romances do really teach anything, or produce any effective operation, it is usually through a far more subtle process than the ostensible one. The author has considered it hardly worth his while, therefore, relentlessly to impale the story with its moral as with an iron rod,—or, rather, as by sticking a pin through a butterfly,—thus at once depriving it of life, and causing it to stiffen in an ungainly and unnatural attitude. A high truth, indeed, fairly, finely, and skilfully wrought out, brightening at every step, and crowning the final development of a work of fiction, may add an artistic glory, but it is never any truer, and seldom any more evident, at the last page than at the first.

The reader may perhaps choose to assign an actual locality to the imaginary events of this narrative. If permitted by the historical connection,—which, though slight, was essential to his plan,—the author would very willingly have avoided anything of this nature. Not to speak of other objections, it exposes the romance to an inflexible and exceedingly dangerous species of criticism, by bringing his fancy-pictures almost into positive contact with the realities of the moment. It has been no part of his object, however, to describe local manners, nor in any way to meddle with the characteristics of a community for whom he cherishes a proper respect and natural regard. He trusts not to be considered as unpardonably offending by laying out a street that infringes upon nobody's private

rights, and appropriating a lot of land which had no visible owner, and building a house of materials long in use for constructing castles in the air. The personages of the tale—though they give themselves out to be of ancient stability and considerable prominence—are really of the author's own making, or, at all events, of his own mixing, their virtues can shed no lustre, nor their defects redound, in the remotest degree, to the discredit of the venerable town of which they profess to be inhabitants. He would be glad, therefore, if—especially in the quarter to which he alludes—the book may be read strictly as a Romance, having a great deal more to do with the clouds overhead than with any portion of the actual soil of the County of Essex. Lenox, January 27, 1851.

from PREFACE TO THE MARBLE
FAUN (1860)

This Romance was sketched out during a residence of considerable length in Italy, and has been re-written and prepared for the press in England. The author proposed to himself merely to write a fanciful story, evolving a thoughtful moral, and did not purpose attempting a portraiture of Italian manners and character. He has lived too long abroad not to be aware that a foreigner seldom acquires that knowledge of a country at once flexible and profound, which may justify him in endeavoring to idealize its traits.

Italy, as the site of his Romance, was chiefly valuable to him as affording a sort of poetic or fairy precinct, where actualities would not be so terribly insisted upon as they are, and must needs be, in America. No author, without a trial, can conceive of the difficulty of writing a romance about a country where there is no shadow, no antiquity, no mystery, no picturesque and gloomy wrong, nor anything but a commonplace prosperity, in broad and simple daylight, as is happily the case with my dear native land. It will be very long, I trust, before romance-writers may find congenial and easily handled themes, either in the annals of our stalwart republic, or in any characteristic and probable events of our individual lives. Romance and poetry, ivy,

lichens, and wall-flowers need ruin to make them grow.

[American Society as a Field for Fiction]
from HAWTHORNE (1879)

HENRY JAMES
(1843-1916)

With the Preface to *The Marble Faun*, compare the following notable passage in James's study of Hawthorne in the English Men of Letters Series.

- - - There is a phrase in the preface to his novel of *Transformation*,¹ which must have lingered in the minds of many Americans who have tried to write novels, and to lay the scene of them in the Western world "No author, without a trial, can conceive of the difficulty of writing a romance about a country where there is no shadow, no antiquity, no mystery, no picturesque and gloomy wrong, nor anything but a commonplace prosperity, in broad and simple daylight, as is happily the case with my dear native land." The perusal of Hawthorne's American Note-Books operates as a practical commentary upon this somewhat ominous text. It does so at least to my own mind; it would be too much, perhaps, to say that the effect would be the same for the usual English reader. An American reads between the lines—he completes the suggestions—he constructs a picture. I think I am not guilty of any gross injustice in saying that the picture he constructs from Hawthorne's American diaries, though by no means without charms of its own, is not, on the whole, an interesting one. It is characterised by an extraordinary blankness—a curious paleness of colour and paucity of detail. Hawthorne, as I have said, has a large and healthy appetite for detail, and one is, therefore, the more struck with the lightness of the diet to which his observation was condemned. For myself, as I turn the pages of his journals, I seem to see the image of the crude and simple society in which he lived. I use these epithets, of course, not invidiously, but descriptively; if one desire to enter as closely as possible into Hawthorne's situation, one must endeavour to reproduce his circumstances. We are struck with the large number of elements that were absent from them, and the coldness, the thin-

¹ The English title of *The Marble Faun*

ness, the blankness, to repeat my epithet, present themselves so vividly that our foremost feeling is that of compassion for a romancer looking for subjects in such a field. It takes so many things, as Hawthorne must have felt later in life, when he made the acquaintance of the denser, richer, warmer European spectacle—it takes such an accumulation of history and custom, such a complexity of manners and types, to form a fund of suggestion for a novelist. If Hawthorne had been a young Englishman, or a young Frenchman of the same degree of genius, the same cast of mind, the same habits, his consciousness of the world around him would have been a very different affair; however obscure, however reserved, his own personal life, his sense of the life of his fellow-mortals would have been almost infinitely more various. The negative side of the spectacle on which Hawthorne looked out, in his contemplative saunterings and reveries, might, indeed, with a little ingenuity, be made almost ludicrous; one might enumerate the items of high civilization, as it exists in other countries, which are absent from the texture of American life, until it should become a wonder to know what was left. No State, in the European sense of the word, and indeed barely a specific national name. No sovereign, no court, no personal loyalty, no aristocracy, no church, no clergy, no army, no diplomatic service, no country gentlemen, no palaces, no castles, nor manors, nor old country-houses, nor parsonages, nor thatched cottages, nor ivied ruins: no cathedrals, nor abbeys, nor little Norman churches; no great Universities nor public² schools—no Oxford, nor Eton, nor Harrow; no literature, no novels, no museums, no pictures, no political society, no sporting class—no Epsom nor Ascot! Some such list as that might be drawn up of the absent things in American life—especially in the American life of forty years ago, the effect of which, upon an English or a French imagination, would probably, as a general thing, be appalling. The natural remark, in the almost lurid light of such an indictment, would be that if these things are left out, everything is left out. The American knows that a good deal remains; what it is that remains—that is his secret, his joke, as one may say. It would be cruel, in this

² In the English sense of the word, “public” schools are not state schools but such endowed preparatory schools as Eton, Harrow, and Rugby.

terrible denudation, to deny him the consolation of his natural gift, that “American humour” of which of late years we have heard so much.³

THE MAYPOLE OF MERRY MOUNT (1835)

This story, which suggested the plot of Howard Hanson's opera, *Merry Mount*, was first published in *The Token* for 1836 and later included in *Twice Told Tales* (1837). It should be compared with the accounts of Merry Mount given by William Bradford and Thomas Morton in the present volume. Hawthorne prefixed the following note to the story:

“There is an admirable foundation for a philosophic romance in the curious history of the early settlement of Mount Wollaston, or Merry Mount. In the slight sketch here attempted, the facts, recorded on the grave pages of our New England annalists, have wrought themselves, almost spontaneously, into a sort of allegory. The masques, mummeries, and festive customs, described in the text, are in accordance with the manners of the age. Authority on these points may be found in Sturt's Book of English Sports and Pastimes.”

The following entry in his *American Note-Books* seems to foreshadow the story: “The world is so sad and solemn, that things meant in jest are liable, by an overpowering influence, to become dreadful earnest,—gayly dressed fantasies turning to ghostly and black-clad images of themselves.”

Bright were the days at Merry Mount, when the Maypole was the banner staff of that gay colony! They who reared it, should their banner be triumphant, were to pour sunshine over New England's rugged hills, and scatter flower

³ Joel Chandler Harris attacked James's conclusions in an article entitled “Provinciality in Literature—A Defense of Boston” (reprinted in Julia Collier Harris (ed.), *Joel Chandler Harris: Editor and Essayist*, 1931, pp. 186–191). After presenting his own theory: “. . . that no enduring work of the imagination has ever been produced save by a mind in which the provincial instinct was the controlling influence,” Harris contends that, for literary material, Hawthorne “had before him all the ruins of human passion, and . . . was surrounded by the antiquity of the soul.” He goes on: “We hardly know what Boston ought to do under the circumstances; but it does seem to us that the provinciality which gives us Hawthorne, Holmes, Whittier, Howells, Harte, and Lowell ought to be as well worth nurturing and cultivating as the exquisite culture which has given us (and the rest of the universe) Mr. James.”

seeds throughout the soil. Jollity and gloom were contending for an empire. Midsummer eve had come, bringing deep verdure to the forest, and roses in her lap, of a more vivid hue than the tender buds of Spring. But May, or her mirthful spirit, dwelt all the year round at Merry Mount, sporting with the Summer months, and revelling with Autumn, and basking in the glow of Winter's fireside. Through a world of toil and care she flitted with a dream-like smile, and came hither to find a home among the lightsome hearts of Merry Mount

Never had the Maypole been so gayly decked as at sunset on midsummer eve. This venerated emblem was a pine-tree, which had preserved the slender grace of youth, while it equalled the loftiest height of the old wood monarchs. From its top streamed a silken banner, colored like the rainbow. Down nearly to the ground the pole was dressed with birchen boughs, and others of the liveliest green, and some with silvery leaves, fastened by ribbons that fluttered in fantastic knots of twenty different colors, but no sad ones. Garden flowers, and blossoms of the wilderness, laughed gladly forth amid the verdure, so fresh and dewy that they must have grown by magic on that happy pine-tree. Where this green and flowery splendor terminated, the shaft of the Maypole was stained with the seven brilliant hues of the banner at its top. On the lowest green bough hung an abundant wreath of roses, some that had been gathered in the sunniest spots of the forest, and others, of still richer blush, which the colonists had reared from English seed. O, people of the Golden Age, the chief of your husbandry was to raise flowers!

But what was the wild throng that stood hand in hand about the Maypole? It could not be that the fauns and nymphs, when driven from their classic groves and homes of ancient fable, had sought refuge, as all the persecuted did, in the fresh woods of the West. These were Gothic monsters, though perhaps of Grecian ancestry. On the shoulders of a comely youth uprose the head and branching antlers of a stag; a second, human in all other points, had the grim visage of a wolf; a third, still with the trunk and limbs of a mortal man, showed the beard and horns of a venerable he-goat. There was the likeness of a bear erect, brute in all but his hind legs, which were adorned with pink silk stockings. And here again, almost as wondrous, stood a

real bear of the dark forest, lending each of his fore-paws to the grasp of a human hand, and as ready for the dance as any in that circle. His inferior nature rose half way, to meet his companions as they stooped. Other faces wore the similitude of man or woman, but distorted or extravagant, with red noses pendulous before their mouths, which seemed of awful depth, and stretched from ear to ear in an eternal fit of laughter. Here might be seen the Salvage Man, well known in heraldry, hairy as a baboon, and girdled with green leaves. By his side, a noble figure, but still a counterfeit, appeared an Indian hunter, with feathery crest and wampum belt. Many of this strange company wore fools-caps, and had little bells appended to their garments, tinkling with a silvery sound, responsive to the inaudible music of their gleesome spirits. Some youths and maidens were of soberer garb, yet well maintained their places in the irregular throng by the expression of wild revelry upon their features. Such were the colonists of Merry Mount, as they stood in the broad smile of sunset round their venerated Maypole.

Had a wanderer, bewildered in the melancholy forest, heard their mirth, and stolen a half-affrighted glance, he might have fancied them the crew of Comus, some already transformed to brutes, some midway between man and beast, and the others rioting in the flow of tipsy jollity that foreran the change. But a band of Puritans, who watched the scene, invisible themselves, compared the masques to those devils and ruined souls with whom their superstition peopled the black wilderness.

Within the ring of monsters appeared the two airiest forms that had ever trodden on any more solid footing than a purple and golden cloud. One was a youth in glistening apparel, with a scarf of the rainbow pattern crosswise on his breast. His right hand held a gilded staff, the ensign of high dignity among the revellers, and his left grasped the slender fingers of a fair maiden, not less gayly decorated than himself. Bright roses glowed in contrast with the dark and glossy curls of each, and were scattered round their feet, or had sprung up spontaneously there. Behind this lightsome couple, so close to the Maypole that its boughs shaded his jovial face, stood the figure of an English priest, canonically dressed, yet decked with flowers, in heathen fashion, and wearing a chaplet of the

native vine leaves. By the riot of his rolling eye, and the pagan decorations of his holy garb, he seemed the wildest monster there, and the very Comus of the crew.

"Votaries of the Maypole," cried the flower-decked priest, "merrily, all day long, have the woods echoed to your mirth. But be this your merriest hour, my hearts! Lo, here stand the Lord and Lady of the May, whom I, a clerk of Oxford, and high priest of Merry Mount, am presently to join in holy matrimony. Up with your nimble spirits, ye morris-dancers, green men, and glee maidens, bears and wolves, and horned gentlemen! Come; a chorus now, rich with the old mirth of Merry England, and the wilder glee of this fresh forest; and then a dance, to show the youthful pair what life is made of, and how airily they should go through it! All ye that love the Maypole, lend your voices to the nuptial song of the Lord and Lady of the May!"

This wedlock was more serious than most affairs of Merry Mount, where jest and delusion, trick and fantasy, kept up a continual carnival. The Lord and Lady of the May, though their titles must be laid down at sunset, were really and truly to be partners for the dance of life, beginning the measure that same bright eve. The wreath of roses, that hung from the lowest green bough of the Maypole, had been twined for them, and would be thrown over both their heads, in symbol of their flowering union. When the priest had spoken, therefore, a riotous uproar burst from the rout of monstrous figures.

"Begin you the stave, reverend Sir," cried they all; "and never did the woods ring to such a merry peal as we of the Maypole shall send up!"

Immediately a prelude of pipe, cithern, and viol, touched with practised minstrelsy, began to play from a neighboring thicket, in such a mirthful cadence that the boughs of the Maypole quivered to the sound. But the May Lord, he of the gilded staff, chancing to look into his Lady's eyes, was wonder-struck at the almost pensive glance that met his own.

"Edith, sweet Lady of the May," whispered he reproachfully, "is yon wreath of roses a garland to hang above our graves, that you look so sad? O, Edith, this is our golden time! Tarnish it not by any pensive shadow of the mind; for it

may be that nothing of futurity will be brighter than the mere remembrance of what is now passing."

"That was the very thought that saddened me! How came it in your mind too?" said Edith, in a still lower tone than he, for it was high treason to be sad at Merry Mount. "Therefore do I sigh amid this festive music. And besides, dear Edgar, I struggle as with a dream, and fancy that these shapes of our jovial friends are visionary, and their mirth unreal, and that we are not true Lord and Lady of the May. What is the mystery in my heart?"

Just then, as if a spell had loosened them, down came a little shower of withering rose leaves from the Maypole. Alas, for the young lovers! No sooner had their hearts glowed with real passion than they were sensible of something vague and unsubstantial in their former pleasures, and felt a dreary presentiment of inevitable change. From the moment that they truly loved, they had subjected themselves to earth's doom of care and sorrow, and troubled joy, and had no more a home at Merry Mount. That was Edith's mystery. Now leave we the priest to marry them, and the masquers to sport round the Maypole, till the last sunbeam be withdrawn from its summit, and the shadows of the forest mingle gloomily in the dance. Meanwhile, we may discover who these gay people were

Two hundred years ago, and more, the old world and its inhabitants became mutually weary of each other. Men voyaged by thousands to the West: some to barter glass beads, and such like jewels, for the furs of the Indian hunter; some to conquer virgin empires, and one stern band to pray. But none of these motives had much weight with the colonists of Merry Mount. Their leaders were men who had sported so long with life, that when Thought and Wisdom came, even these unwelcome guests were led astray by the crowd of vanities which they should have put to flight. Erring Thought and perverted Wisdom were made to put on masques, and play the fool. The men of whom we speak, after losing the heart's fresh gayety, imagined a wild philosophy of pleasure, and came hither to act out their latest day-dream. They gathered followers from all that giddy tribe whose whole life is like the festal days of soberer men. In their train were minstrels, not

unknown in London streets. wandering players, whose theatres had been the halls of noblemen; mummers, rope-dancers, and mountebanks, who would long be missed at wakes, church ales, and fairs; in a word, mirth-makers of every sort, such as abounded in that age, but now began to be discountenanced by the rapid growth of Puritanism. Light had their footsteps been on land, and as lightly they came across the sea. Many had been maddened by their previous troubles into a gay despair; others were as madly gay in the flush of youth, like the May Lord and his Lady; but whatever might be the quality of their mirth, old and young were gay at Merry Mount. The young deemed themselves happy. The elder spirits, if they knew that mirth was but the counterfeit of happiness, yet followed the false shadow wilfully, because at least her garments glittered brightest. Sworn triflers of a lifetime, they would not venture among the sober truths of life not even to be truly blest.

All the hereditary pastimes of Old England were transplanted hither. The King of Christmas was duly crowned, and the Lord of Misrule bore potent sway. On the Eve of St. John, they felled whole acres of the forest to make bonfires, and danced by the blaze all night, crowned with garlands, and throwing flowers into the flame. At harvest time, though their crop was of the smallest, they made an image with the sheaves of Indian corn, and wreathed it with autumnal garlands, and bore it home triumphantly. But what chiefly characterized the colonists of Merry Mount was their veneration for the Maypole. It has made their true history a poet's tale. Spring decked the hallowed emblem with young blossoms and fresh green boughs; Summer brought roses of the deepest blush, and the perfected foliage of the forest; Autumn enriched it with that red and yellow gorgeousness which converts each wildwood leaf into a painted flower; and Winter silvered it with sleet, and hung it round with icicles, till it flashed in the cold sunshine, itself a frozen sunbeam. Thus each alternate season did homage to the Maypole, and paid it a tribute of its own richest splendor. Its votaries danced round it, once, at least, in every month; sometimes they called it their religion, or their altar; but always, it was the banner staff of Merry Mount.

Unfortunately, there were men in the new world of a sterner faith than these Maypole wor-

shippers. Not far from Merry Mount was a settlement of Puritans, most dismal wretches, who said their prayers before daylight, and then wrought in the forest or the cornfield till evening made it prayer time again. Their weapons were always at hand to shoot down the straggling savage. When they met in conclave, it was never to keep up the old English mirth, but to hear sermons three hours long, or to proclaim bounties on the heads of wolves and the scalps of Indians. Their festivals were fast days, and their chief pastime the singing of psalms. Woe to the youth or maiden who did but dream of a dance! The selectman nodded to the constable; and there sat the light-heeled reprobate in the stocks; or if he danced, it was round the whipping post, which might be termed the Puritan Maypole.

A party of these grim Puritans, toiling through the difficult woods, each with a horse-load of iron armor to burden his footsteps, would sometimes draw near the sunny precincts of Merry Mount. There were the silken colonists, sporting round their Maypole, perhaps teaching a bear to dance, or striving to communicate their mirth to the grave Indian; or masquerading in the skins of deer and wolves, which they had hunted for that especial purpose. Often, the whole colony were playing at blindman's buff, magistrates and all, with their eyes bandaged, except a single scapegoat, whom the blinded sinners pursued by the tinkling of the bells at his garments. Once, it is said, they were seen following a flower-decked corpse, with merriment and festive music, to his grave. But did the dead man laugh? In their quietest times, they sang ballads and told tales, for the edification of their pious visitors; or perplexed them with juggling tricks; or grinned at them through horse collars; and when sport itself grew wearisome, they made game of their own stupidity, and began a yawning match. At the very least of these enormities, the men of iron shook their heads and frowned so darkly that the revellers looked up, imagining that a momentary cloud had overcast the sunshine, which was to be perpetual there. On the other hand, the Puritans affirmed that, when a psalm was pealing from their place of worship, the echo which the forest sent them back seemed often like the chorus of a jolly catch, closing with a roar of laughter. Who but the fiend, and his bond-slaves, the

crew of Merry Mount, had thus disturbed them? In due time, a feud arose, stern and bitter on one side, and as serious on the other as anything could be among such light spirits as had sworn allegiance to the Maypole. The future complexion of New England was involved in this important quarrel. Should the grizzly saints establish their jurisdiction over the gay sinners, then would their spirits darken all the clime and make it a land of clouded visages, of hard toil, of sermon and psalm forever. But should the banner staff of Merry Mount be fortunate, sunshine would break upon the hills, and flowers would beautify the forest, and late posterity do homage to the Maypole.

After these authentic passages from history, we return to the nuptials of the Lord and Lady of the May. Alas! we have delayed too long, and must darken our tale too suddenly. As we glance again at the Maypole, a solitary sunbeam is fading from the summit, and leaves only a faint, golden tinge blended with the hues of the rainbow banner. Even that dim light is now withdrawn, relinquishing the whole domain of Merry Mount to the evening gloom, which has rushed so instantaneously from the black surrounding woods. But some of these black shadows have rushed forth in human shape.

Yes, with the setting sun, the last day of mirth had passed from Merry Mount. The ring of gay masquers was disordered and broken; the stag lowered his antlers in dismay; the wolf grew weaker than a lamb; the bells of the morris-dancers tinkled with tremulous affright. The Puritans had played a characteristic part in the Maypole mummeries. Their darksome figures were intermixed with the wild shapes of their foes, and made the scene a picture of the moment when waking thoughts start up amid the scattered fantasies of a dream. The leader of the hostile party stood in the centre of the circle, while the rout of monsters cowered around him, like evil spirits in the presence of a dread magician. No fantastic foolery could look him in the face. So stern was the energy of his aspect, that the whole man, visage, frame, and soul, seemed wrought of iron, gifted with life and thought, yet all of one substance with his headpiece and breastplate. It was the Puritan of Puritans; it was Endicott himself!

"Stand off, priest of Baal!" said he, with a grim frown, and laying no reverent hand upon

the surplice. "I know thee, Blackstone!¹ Thou art the man who couldst not abide the rule even of thine own corrupted church, and hast come hither to preach iniquity, and to give example of it in thy life. But now shall it be seen that the Lord hath sanctified this wilderness for his peculiar people. Woe unto them that would defile it! And first, for this flower-decked abomination, the altar of thy worship!"

And with his keen sword Endicott assaulted the hallowed Maypole. Nor long did it resist his arm. It groaned with a dismal sound; it showed leaves and rosebuds upon the remorseless enthusiast; and finally, with all its green boughs and ribbons and flowers, symbolic of departed pleasures, down fell the banner staff of Merry Mount. As it sank, tradition says, the evening sky grew darker, and the woods threw forth a more sombre shadow.

"There," cried Endicott, looking triumphantly on his work, "there lies the only Maypole in New England! The thought is strong within me that, by its fall, is shadowed forth the fate of light and idle mirthmakers, amongst us and on posterity. Amen, saith John Endicott."

"Amen!" echoed his followers.

But the votaries of the Maypole gave one groan for their idol. At the sound, the Puritan leader glanced at the crew of Comus, each a figure of broad mirth, yet, at this moment, strangely expressive of sorrow and dismay.

"Valiant captain," quoth Peter Palfrey, the Ancient of the band, "what order shall be taken with the prisoners?"

"I thought not to repent me of cutting down a Maypole," replied Endicott, "yet now I could find in my heart to plant it again, and give each of these bestial pagans one other dance round their idol. It would have served rarely for a whipping-post!"

"But there are pine-trees enow," suggested the lieutenant.

"True, good Ancient," said the leader. "Wherefore, bind the heathen crew, and bestow on them a small matter of stripes apiece, as earnest of our future justice. Set some of the

¹ Did Governor Endicott speak less positively, we should suspect a mistake here. The Rev. Mr. Blackstone, though an eccentric, is not known to have been an immoral man. We rather doubt his identity with the priest of Merry Mount. (Author's note.)

rogues in the stocks to rest themselves, so soon as Providence shall bring us to one of our own well-ordered settlements, where such accommodations may be found. Further penalties, such as branding and cropping of ears, shall be thought of hereafter."

"How many stripes for the priest?" inquired Ancient Palfrey.

"None as yet," answered Endicott, bending his iron frown upon the culprit. "It must be for the Great and General Court to determine, whether stripes and long imprisonment, and other grievous penalty, may atone for his transgressions. Let him look to himself! For such as violate our civil order, it may be permitted us to show mercy. But woe to the wretch that troubleth our religion!"

"And this dancing bear," resumed the officer. "Must he share the stripes of his fellows?"

"Shoot him through the head!" said the energetic Puritan. "I suspect witchcraft in the beast."

"Here be a couple of shining ones," continued Peter Palfrey, pointing his weapon at the Lord and Lady of the May. "They seem to be of high station among these misdoers. Methinks their dignity will not be fitted with less than a double share of stripes."

Endicott rested on his sword, and closely surveyed the dress and aspect of the hapless pair. There they stood, pale, downcast, and apprehensive. Yet there was an air of mutual support, and of pure affection, seeking aid and giving it, that showed them to be man and wife, with the sanction of a priest upon their love. The youth, in the peril of the moment, had dropped his gilded staff, and thrown his arm about the Lady of the May, who leaned against his breast, too lightly to burden him, but with weight enough to express that their destinies were linked together, for good or evil. They looked first at each other, and then into the grim captain's face. There they stood, in the first hour of wedlock, while the idle pleasures, of which their companions were the emblems, had given place to the sternest cares of life, personified by the dark Puritans. But never had their youthful beauty seemed so pure and high as when its glow was chastened by adversity.

"Youth," said Endicott, "ye stand in an evil case, thou and thy maiden wife. Make ready presently, for I am minded that ye shall both have a token to remember your wedding day!"

"Stern man," cried the May Lord, "how can I move thee? Were the means at hand, I would resist to the death. Being powerless, I entreat. Do with me as thou wilt, but let Edith go untouched!"

"Not so," replied the immitigable zealot. "We are not wont to show an idle courtesy to that sex, which requireth the stricter discipline. What sayest thou, maid? Shall thy silken bridegroom suffer thy share of the penalty, besides his own?"

"Be it death," said Edith, "and lay it all on me!"

Truly, as Endicott had said, the poor lovers stood in a woeful case. Their foes were triumphant, their friends captive and abased, their home desolate, the benighted wilderness around them, and a righteous destiny, in the shape of the Puritan leader, their only guide. Yet the deepening twilight could not altogether conceal that the iron man was softened; he smiled at the fair spectacle of early love; he almost sighed for the inevitable blight of early hopes.

"The troubles of life have come hastily on this young couple," observed Endicott. "We will see how they comport themselves under their present trials ere we burden them with greater. If, among the spoil, there be any garments of a more decent fashion, let them be put upon this May Lord and his Lady, instead of their glistening vanities. Look to it, some of you."

"And shall not the youth's hair be cut?" asked Peter Palfrey, looking with abhorrence at the love-lock and long glossy curls of the young man.

"Crop it forthwith, and that in the true pumpkin-shell fashion," answered the captain. "Then bring them along with us, but more gently than their fellows. There be qualities in the youth, which may make him valiant to fight, and sober to toil, and pious to pray; and in the maiden, they may fit her to become a mother in our Israel, bringing up babes in better nurture than her own hath been. Nor think ye, young ones, that they are the happiest, even in our lifetime of a moment, who misspend it in dancing round a Maypole!"

And Endicott, the severest Puritan of all who laid the rock foundation of New England, lifted the wreath of roses from the ruin of the Maypole, and threw it, with his own gauntleted hand, over the heads of the Lord and Lady of

the May. It was a deed of prophecy. As the moral gloom of the world overpowers all systematic gayety, even so was their home of wild mirth made desolate amid the sad forest. They returned to it no more. But as their flowery garland was wreathed of the brightest roses that had grown there, so, in the tie that united them, were intertwined all the purest and best of their early joys. They went heavenward, supporting each other along the difficult path which it was their lot to tread, and never wasted one regretful thought on the vanities of Merry Mount.

YOUNG GOODMAN BROWN

(1835)

This story, which first appeared in the *New England Magazine* for April, 1835, was included in *Mosses from an Old Manse* (1846). The story owes something to Cotton Mather's *Wonders of the Invisible World* (1693), from which we quote a few lines:

"The *Devil*, exhibiting himself ordinarily as a small *Black Man*, has decoy'd a fearful knot of proud, froward, ignorant, envious and malicious Creatures, to list themselves in his horrid Service, by entering their Names in a Book by him tendred unto them. These Witches . . . have met in Hellish *Rendezvous*, wherein the Confessors do say, they have had their Diabolical Sacraments, imitating the *Baptism* and the *Supper* of our Lord."

In an article on "The Sources of Hawthorne's 'Young Goodman Brown'," *American Literature*, V, 342-348 (January, 1934), Miss Fanny Cheery argues that the story owes something also to Francis Bacon and to a story by Cervantes, "El Coloquio de los Perros" ("The Conversation of the Dogs"). The point of the story, says Austin Warren, who regards it as perhaps Hawthorne's finest short story, is "the devastating effect of moral scepticism." He adds: "The historical setting adds color and eases the strain of the supernatural penumbra, but the tale is universal in its implications, and transcends its setting." See also Richard H. Fogle, "Ambiguity and Clarity in Hawthorne's 'Young Goodman Brown,'" *New England Quarterly*, XVIII, 448-465 (December, 1945).

Young Goodman Brown came forth at sunset into the street at Salem village; but put his head back, after crossing the threshold, to exchange a parting kiss with his young wife. And Faith, as the wife was aptly named, thrust her

own pretty head into the street, letting the wind play with the pink ribbons of her cap while she called to Goodman Brown.

"Dearest heart," whispered she, softly and rather sadly, when her lips were close to his ear, "prithee put off your journey until sunrise and sleep in your own bed to-night. A lone woman is troubled with such dreams and such thoughts that she's afraid of herself sometimes. Pray tarry with me this night, dear husband, of all nights in the year."

"My love and my Faith," replied young Goodman Brown, "of all nights in the year, this one night must I tarry away from thee. My journey, as thou callest it, forth and back again, must needs be done 'twixt now and sunrise. What, my sweet wife, dost thou doubt me already, and we but three months married?"

"Then God bless you!" said Faith, with the pink ribbons, "and may you find all well when you come back."

"Amen!" cried Goodman Brown. "Say thy prayers, dear Faith, and go to bed at dusk, and no harm will come to thee."

So they parted; and the young man pursued his way until, being about to turn the corner by the meeting-house, he looked back and saw the head of Faith still peeping after him with a melancholy air, in spite of her pink ribbons.

"Poor little Faith!" thought he, for his heart smote him, "What a wretch am I to leave her on such an errand! She talks of dreams, too. Methought as she spoke there was trouble in her face, as if a dream had warned her what work is to be done to-night. But no, no; 'twould kill her to think it. Well, she's a blessed angel on earth; and after this one night I'll cling to her skirts and follow her to heaven."

With this excellent resolve for the future, Goodman Brown felt himself justified in making more haste on his present evil purpose. He had taken a dreary road, darkened by all the gloomiest trees of the forest, which barely stood aside to let the narrow path creep through, and closed immediately behind. It was all as lonely as could be; and there is this peculiarity in such a solitude, that the traveller knows not who may be concealed by the innumerable trunks and the thick boughs overhead; so that with lonely footsteps he may yet be passing through an unseen multitude.

"There may be a devilish Indian behind every

tree," said Goodman Brown to himself; and he glanced fearfully behind him as he added, "What if the devil himself should be at my very elbow!"

His head being turned back, he passed a crook of the road, and, looking forward again, beheld the figure of a man, in grave and decent attire, seated at the foot of an old tree. He arose at Goodman Brown's approach and walked onward side by side with him.

"You are late, Goodman Brown," said he "The clock of the Old South was striking as I came through Boston, and that is full fifteen minutes ago."

"Faith kept me back a while," replied the young man, with a tremor in his voice, caused by the sudden appearance of his companion, though not wholly unexpected.

It was now deep dusk in the forest, and deep in that part of it where these two were journeying. As nearly as could be discerned, the second traveller was about fifty years old, apparently in the same rank of life as Goodman Brown, and bearing a considerable resemblance to him, though perhaps more in expression than features. Still they might have been taken for father and son. And yet, though the elder person was as simply clad as the younger, and as simple in manner too, he had an indescribable air of one who knew the world, and who would not have felt abashed at the governor's dinner table or in King William's court, were it possible that his affairs should call him thither. But the only thing about him that could be fixed upon as remarkable was his staff, which bore the likeness of a great black snake, so curiously wrought that it might almost be seen to twist and wriggle itself like a living serpent. This, of course, must have been an ocular deception, assisted by the uncertain light.

"Come, Goodman Brown," cried his fellow-traveller, "this is a dull pace for the beginning of a journey. Take my staff, if you are so soon weary."

"Friend," said the other, exchanging his slow pace for a full stop, "having kept covenant by meeting thee here, it is my purpose now to return whence I came. I have scruples touching the matter thou wot'st of."

"Sayest thou so?" replied he of the serpent, smiling apart. "Let us walk on, nevertheless, reasoning as we go: and if I convince thee not

thou shalt turn back. We are but a little way in the forest yet."

"Too far! too far!" exclaimed the goodman, unconsciously resuming his walk "My father never went into the woods on such an errand, nor his father before him. We have been a race of honest men and good Christians since the days of the martyrs; and shall I be the first of the name of Brown that ever took this path and kept—"

"Such company, thou wouldst say," observed the elder person, interpreting his pause "Well said, Goodman Brown! I have been as well acquainted with your family as with ever a one among the Puritans; and that's no trifle to say. I helped your grandfather, the constable, when he lashed the Quaker women so smartly through the streets of Salem; and it was I that brought your father a pitch-pine knot, kindled at my own hearth, to set fire to an Indian village, in King Philip's war. They were my good friends, both; and many a pleasant walk have we had along this path, and returned merrily after midnight. I would fain be friends with you for their sake."

"If it be as thou sayest," replied Goodman Brown, "I marvel they never spoke of these matters, or, verily, I marvel not, seeing that the least rumor of the sort would have driven them from New England. We are a people of prayer, and good works to boot, and abide no such wickedness."

"Wickedness or not," said the traveller with the twisted staff, "I have a very general acquaintance here in New England. The deacons of many a church have drunk the communion wine with me; the selectmen of divers towns make me their chairman; and a majority of the Great and General Court are firm supporters of my interest. The governor and I, too—But these are state secrets."

"Can this be so?" cried Goodman Brown, with a stare of amazement at his undisturbed companion. "Howbeit, I have nothing to do with the governor and council; they have their own ways, and are no rule for a simple husbandman like me. But, were I to go on with thee, how should I meet the eye of that good old man, our minister, at Salem village? Oh, his voice would make me tremble both Sabbath day and lecture day."

Thus far the elder traveller had listened with

due gravity; but now burst into a fit of irrepressible mirth, shaking himself so violently that his snake-like staff actually seemed to wriggle in sympathy.

"Ha! ha! ha!" shouted he again and again; then composing himself, "Well, go on, Goodman Brown, go on; but, prithee, don't kill me with laughing."

"Well, then, to end the matter at once," said Goodman Brown, considerably nettled, "there is my wife, Faith. It would break her dear little heart; and I'd rather break my own."

"Nay, if that be the case," answered the other, "e'en go thy ways, Goodman Brown. I would not for twenty old women like the one hobbling before us that Faith should come to any harm."

As he spoke he pointed his staff at a female figure on the path, in whom Goodman Brown recognized a very pious and exemplary dame, who had taught him his catechism in youth, and was still his moral and spiritual adviser, jointly with the minister and Deacon Gookin.

"A marvel, truly, that Goody Cloyse should be so far in the wilderness at night fall," said he. "But with your leave, friend, I shall take a cut through the woods until we have left this Christian woman behind. Being a stranger to you, she might ask whom I was consorting with and whither I was going."

"Be it so," said his fellow-traveller. "Betake you to the woods, and let me keep the path."

Accordingly the young man turned aside, but took care to watch his companion, who advanced softly along the road until he had come within a staff's length of the old dame. She, meanwhile, was making the best of her way, with singular speed for so aged a woman, and mumbling some indistinct words—a prayer, doubtless—as she went. The traveller put forth his staff and touched her withered neck with what seemed the serpent's tail.

"The devil!" screamed the pious old lady.

"Then Goody Cloyse knows her old friend?" observed the traveller, confronting her and leaning on his writhing stick.

"Ah, forsooth, and is it your worship indeed?" cried the good dame. "Yea, truly is it, and in the very image of my old gossip, Goodman Brown, the grandfather of the silly fellow that now is. But—would your worship believe it?—my broomstick hath strangely disappeared, stolen, as I suspect, by that unhangd witch, Goody

Cory, and that, too, when I was all anointed with the juice of smallage, and cinquefoil, and wolf's bane —"

"Mingled with fine wheat and the fat of a new-born babe," said the shape of old Goodman Brown.

"Ah, your worship knows the recipe," cried the old lady, cackling aloud. "So, as I was saying, being all ready for the meeting, and no horse to ride on, I made up my mind to foot it; for they tell me there is a nice young man to be taken into communion to-night. But now your good worship will lend me your arm, and we shall be there in a twinkling."

"That can hardly be," answered her friend. "I may not spare you my arm, Goody Cloyse, but here is my staff, if you will."

So saying, he threw it down at her feet, where, perhaps, it assumed life, being one of the rods which its owner had formerly lent to the Egyptian magi. Of this fact, however, Goodman Brown could not take cognizance. He had cast up his eyes in astonishment, and, looking down again, beheld neither Goody Cloyse nor the serpentine staff, but his fellow-traveller alone, who waited for him as calmly as if nothing had happened.

"That old woman taught me my catechism," said the young man; and there was a world of meaning in this simple comment.

They continued to walk onward, while the elder traveller exhorted his companion to make good speed and persevere in the path, discoursing so aptly that his arguments seemed rather to spring up in the bosom of his auditor than to be suggested by himself. As they went, he plucked a branch of maple to serve for a walking stick, and began to strip it of the twigs and little boughs, which were wet with evening dew. The moment his fingers touched them they became strangely withered and dried up as with a week's sunshine. Thus the pair proceeded, at a good free pace, until suddenly, in a gloomy hollow of the road, Goodman Brown sat himself down on the stump of a tree and refused to go any farther.

"Friend," said he, stubbornly, "my mind is made up. Not another step will I budge on this errand. What if a wretched old woman do choose to go to the devil when I thought she was going to heaven: is that any reason why I should quit my dear Faith and go after her?"

"You will think better of this by and by," said

his acquaintance, composedly. "Sit here and rest yourself a while; and when you feel like moving again, there is my staff to help you along."

Without more words, he threw his companion the maple stick, and was as speedily out of sight as if he had vanished into the gloom. The young man sat a few moments by the roadside, applauding himself greatly, and thinking with how clear a conscience he should meet the minister in his morning walk, nor shrink from the eye of good old Deacon Gookin. And what calm sleep would be his that very night, which was to have been spent so wickedly, but so purely and sweetly now, in the arms of Faith! Amidst these pleasant and praiseworthy meditations, Goodman Brown heard the tramp of horses along the road, and deemed it advisable to conceal himself within the verge of the forest, conscious of the guilty purpose that had brought him thither, though now so happily turned from it.

On came the hoof tramps and the voices of the riders, two grave old voices, conversing soberly as they drew near. These mingled sounds appeared to pass along the road, within a few yards of the young man's hiding-place; but, owing doubtless to the depth of the gloom at that particular spot, neither the travellers nor their steeds were visible. Though their figures brushed the small boughs by the wayside, it could not be seen that they intercepted, even for a moment, the faint gleam from the strip of bright sky athwart which they must have passed. Goodman Brown alternately crouched and stood on tiptoe, pulling aside the branches and thrusting forth his head as far as he durst without discerning so much as a shadow. It vexed him the more, because he could have sworn, were such a thing possible, that he recognized the voices of the minister and Deacon Gookin, jogging along quietly, as they were wont to do, when bound to some ordination or ecclesiastical council. While yet within hearing, one of the riders stopped to pluck a switch.

"Of the two, reverend sir," said the voice like the deacon's, "I had rather miss an ordination dinner than to-night's meeting. They tell me that some of our community are to be here from Falmouth and beyond, and others from Connecticut and Rhode Island, besides several of the Indian powwows, who, after their fashion, know almost as much deviltry as the best of us. More-

over, there is a goodly young woman to be taken into communion."

"Mighty well, Deacon Gookin!" replied the solemn old tones of the minister "Spur up, or we shall be late. Nothing can be done, you know, until I get on the ground."

The hoofs clattered again; and the voices, talking so strangely in the empty air, passed on through the forest, where no church had ever been gathered or solitary Christian prayed. Whither, then, could these holy men be journeying so deep into the heathen wilderness? Young Goodman Brown caught hold of a tree for support, being ready to sink down on the ground, faint and overburdened with the heavy sickness of his heart. He looked up to the sky, doubting whether there really was a heaven above him. Yet there was the blue arch, and the stars brightening in it.

"With heaven above and Faith below, I will yet stand firm against the devil!" cried Goodman Brown.

While he still gazed upward into the deep arch of the firmament and had lifted his hands to pray, a cloud, though no wind was stirring, hurried across the zenith and hid the brightening stars. The blue sky was still visible, except directly overhead, where this black mass of cloud was sweeping swiftly northward. Aloft in the air, as if from the depths of the cloud, came a confused and doubtful sound of voices. Once the listener fancied that he could distinguish the accents of townspeople of his own, men and women, both pious and ungodly, many of whom he had met at the communion table, and had seen others rioting at the tavern. The next moment, so indistinct were the sounds, he doubted whether he had heard aught but the murmur of the old forest, whispering without a wind. Then came a stronger swell of those familiar tones, heard daily in the sunshine at Salem village, but never until now from a cloud of night. There was one voice, of a young woman, uttering lamentations, yet with an uncertain sorrow, and entreating for some favor, which, perhaps, it would grieve her to obtain; and all the unseen multitude, both saints and sinners, seemed to encourage her onward.

"Faith!" shouted Goodman Brown, in a voice of agony and desperation; and the echoes of the forest mocked him, crying, "Faith! Faith!" as if

bewildered wretches were seeking her all through the wilderness

The cry of grief, rage, and terror was yet piercing the night, when the unhappy husband held his breath for a response. There was a scream, drowned immediately in a louder murmur of voices, fading into far-off laughter, as the dark cloud swept away, leaving the clear and silent sky above Goodman Brown. But something fluttered lightly down through the air and caught on the branch of a tree. The young man seized it, and beheld a pink ribbon.

"My Faith is gone!" cried he, after one stupefied moment. "There is no good on earth; and sin is but a name. Come, devil; for to thee is this world given."

And, maddened with despair, so that he laughed loud and long, did Goodman Brown grasp his staff and set forth again, at such a rate that he seemed to fly along the forest path rather than to walk or run. The road grew wilder and drearier and more faintly traced, and vanished at length, leaving him in the heart of the dark wilderness, still rushing onward with the instinct that guides mortal man to evil. The whole forest was peopled with frightful sounds—the creaking of the trees, the howling of wild beasts, and the yell of Indians; while sometimes the wind tolled like a distant church bell, and sometimes gave a broad roar around the traveller, as if all Nature were laughing him to scorn. But he was himself the chief horror of the scene, and shrank not from its other horrors.

"Ha! ha! ha!" roared Goodman Brown when the wind laughed at him. "Let us hear which will laugh loudest. Think not to frighten me with your deviltry. Come witch, come wizard, come Indian powwow, come devil himself, and here comes Goodman Brown. You may as well fear him as he fear you."

In truth, all through the haunted forest there could be nothing more frightful than the figure of Goodman Brown. On he flew among the black pines, brandishing his staff with frenzied gestures, now giving vent to an inspiration of horrid blasphemy, and now shouting forth such laughter as set all the echoes of the forest laughing like demons around him. The fiend in his own shape is less hideous than when he rages in the breast of man. Thus sped the demoniac on his course, until, quivering among the trees, he

saw a red light before him, as when the felled trunks and branches of a clearing have been set on fire, and throw up their lurid blaze against the sky, at the hour of midnight. He paused, in a lull of the tempest that had driven him onward, and heard the swell of what seemed a hymn, rolling solemnly from a distance with the weight of many voices. He knew the tune; it was a familiar one in the choir of the village meeting-house. The verse died heavily away, and was lengthened by a chorus, not of human voices, but of all the sounds of the benighted wilderness pealing in awful harmony together. Goodman Brown cried out, and his cry was lost to his own ear by its unison with the cry of the desert.

In the interval of silence he stole forward until the light glared full upon his eyes. At one extremity of an open space, hemmed in by the dark wall of the forest, arose a rock, bearing some rude, natural resemblance either to an altar or a pulpit, and surrounded by four blazing pines, their tops aflame, their stems untouched, like candles at an evening meeting. The mass of foliage that had overgrown the summit of the rock was all on fire, blazing high into the night and fitfully illuminating the whole field. Each pendent twig and leafy festoon was in a blaze. As the red light arose and fell, a numerous congregation alternately shone forth, then disappeared in shadow, and again grew, as it were, out of the darkness, peopling the heart of the solitary woods at once.

"A grave and dark-clad company," quoth Goodman Brown.

In truth they were such. Among them, quivering to and fro between gloom and splendor, appeared faces that would be seen next day at the council board of the province, and others which, Sabbath after Sabbath, looked devoutly heavenward, and benignantly over the crowded pews, from the holiest pulpits in the land. Some affirm that the lady of the governor was there. At least there were high dames well known to her, and wives of honored husbands, and widows, a great multitude, and ancient maidens, all of excellent repute, and fair young girls, who trembled lest their mothers should espy them. Either the sudden gleams of light flashing over the obscure field bedazzled Goodman Brown, or he recognized a score of the church members of Salem village famous for their especial sanctity.

Good old Deacon Gookin had arrived, and waited at the skirts of that venerable saint, his revered pastor. But, irreverently consorting with these grave, reputable, and pious people, these elders of the church, these chaste dames and dewy virgins, there were men of dissolute lives and women of spotted fame, wretches given over to all mean and filthy vice, and suspected even of horrid crimes. It was strange to see that the good shrank not from the wicked, nor were the sinners abashed by the saints. Scattered also among their pale-faced enemies were the Indian priests, or powwows, who had often scared their native forest with more hideous incantations than any known to English witchcraft.

"But where is Faith?" thought Goodman Brown, and, as hope came into his heart, he trembled.

Another verse of the hymn arose, a slow and mournful strain, such as the pious love, but joined to words which expressed all that our nature can conceive of sin, and darkly hinted at far more. Unfathomable to mere mortals is the lore of fiends. Verse after verse was sung; and still the chorus of the desert swelled between like the deepest tone of a mighty organ; and with the final peal of that dreadful anthem there came a sound, as if the roaring wind, the rushing streams, the howling beasts, and every other voice of the unconcerted wilderness were mingling and according with the voice of guilty man in homage to the prince of all. The four blazing pines threw up a loftier flame, and obscurely discovered shapes and visages of horror on the smoke wreaths above the impious assembly. At the same moment the fire on the rock shot redly forth and formed a glowing arch above its base, where now appeared a figure. With reverence be it spoken, the figure bore no slight similitude, both in garb and manner, to some grave divine of the New England churches.

"Bring forth the converts!" cried a voice that echoed through the field and rolled into the forest.

At the word, Goodman Brown stepped forth from the shadow of the trees and approached the congregation, with whom he felt a loathful brotherhood by the sympathy of all that was wicked in his heart. He could have well-nigh sworn that the shape of his own dead father beckoned him to advance, looking downward

from a smoke wreath, while a woman, with dim features of despair, threw out her hand to warn him back. Was it his mother? But he had no power to retreat one step, nor to resist, even in thought, when the minister and good old Deacon Gookin seized his arms and led him to the blazing rock. Thither came also the slender form of a veiled female, led between Goody Cloyse, that pious teacher of the catechism, and Martha Carrier, who had received the devil's promise to be queen of hell. A rampant hag was she. And there stood the proselytes beneath the canopy of fire.

"Welcome, my children," said the dark figure, "to the communion of your race. Ye have found thus young your nature and your destiny. My children, look behind you!"

They turned; and flashing forth, as it were, in a sheet of flame, the fiend worshippers were seen; the smile of welcome gleamed darkly on every visage.

"There," resumed the sable form, "are all whom ye have revered from youth. Ye deemed them holier than yourselves, and shrank from your own sin, contrasting it with their lives of righteousness and prayerful aspirations heavenward. Yet here are they all in my worshipping assembly. This night it shall be granted you to know their secret deeds: how hoary-bearded elders of the church have whispered wanton words to the young maids of their households; how many a woman, eager for widows' weeds, has given her husband a drink at bedtime and let him sleep his last sleep in her bosom; how beardless youths have made haste to inherit their fathers' wealth; and how fair damsels—blush not, sweet ones—have dug little graves in the garden, and bidden me, the sole guest, to an infant's funeral. By the sympathy of your human hearts for sin ye shall scent out all the places—whether in church, bedchamber, street, field, or forest—where crime has been committed, and shall exult to behold the whole earth one stain of guilt, one mighty blood spot. Far more than this. It shall be yours to penetrate, in every bosom, the deep mystery of sin, the fountain of all wicked arts, and which inexhaustibly supplies more evil impulses than human power—than my power at its utmost—can make manifest in deeds. And now, my children, look upon each other."

They did so; and, by the blaze of the hell-kindled torches, the wretched man beheld his Faith,

and the wife her husband, trembling before that unhallowed altar.

"Lo, there ye stand, my children," said the figure, in a deep and solemn tone, almost sad with its despairing awfulness, as it his once angelic nature could yet mourn for our miserable race. "Depending upon one another's hearts, ye had still hoped that virtue were not all a dream. Now are ye undeceived. Evil is the nature of mankind. Evil must be your only happiness. Welcome again, my children, to the communion of your race."

"Welcome," repeated the fiend worshippers, in one cry of despair and triumph.

And there they stood, the only pair, as it seemed, who were yet hesitating on the verge of wickedness in this dark world. A basin was hollowed, naturally, in the rock. Did it contain water, reddened by the lurid light? or was it blood, or, perchance, a liquid flame? Herein did the shape of evil dip his hand and prepare to lay the mark of baptism upon their foreheads, that they might be partakers of the mystery of sin, more conscious of the secret guilt of others, both in deed and thought, than they could now be of their own. The husband cast one look at his pale wife, and Faith at him. What polluted wretches would the next glance show them to each other, shuddering alike at what they disclosed and what they saw!

"Faith! Faith!" cried the husband, "look up to heaven, and resist the wicked one."

Whether Faith obeyed he knew not. Hardly had he spoken when he found himself amid calm night and solitude, listening to a roar of the wind which died heavily away through the forest. He staggered against the rock, and felt it chill and damp; while a hanging twig, that had been all on fire, besprinkled his cheek with the coldest dew.

The next morning young Goodman Brown came slowly into the street of Salem village, staring around him like a bewildered man. The good old minister was taking a walk along the graveyard to get an appetite for breakfast and meditate his sermon, and bestowed a blessing, as he passed, on Goodman Brown. He shrank from the venerable saint as if to avoid an anathema. Old Deacon Gookin was at domestic worship, and the holy words of his prayer were heard through the open window. "What God doth the wizard pray to?" quoth Goodman

Brown. Goody Cloyse, that excellent old Christian, stood in the early sunshine at her own lattice, catechizing a little girl who had brought her a pint of morning's milk. Goodman Brown snatched away the child as from the grasp of the fiend himself. Turning the corner by the meeting-house, he spied the head of Faith, with the pink ribbons, gazing anxiously forth, and bursting into such joy at sight of him that she skipped along the street and almost kissed her husband before the whole village. But Goodman Brown looked sternly and sadly into her face, and passed on without a greeting.

Had Goodman Brown fallen asleep in the forest and only dreamed a wild dream of a witch-meeting?

Be it so if you will; but, alas! it was a dream of evil omen for young Goodman Brown. A stern, a sad, a darkly meditative, a distrustful, if not a desperate man did he become from the night of that fearful dream. On the Sabbath day, when the congregation were singing a holy psalm, he could not listen because an anthem of sin rushed loudly upon his ear and drowned all the blessed strain. When the minister spoke from the pulpit with power and fervid eloquence, and, with his hand on the open Bible, of the sacred truths of our religion, and of saint-like lives and triumphant deaths, and of future bliss or misery unutterable, then did Goodman Brown turn pale, dreading lest the roof should thunder down upon the gray blasphemer and his hearers. Often, awaking suddenly at midnight, he shrank from the bosom of Faith; and at morning or eventide, when the family knelt down at prayer, he scowled and muttered to himself, and gazed sternly at his wife, and turned away. And when he had lived long, and was borne to his grave a hoary corpse, followed by Faith, an aged woman, and children and grandchildren, a goodly procession, besides neighbors not a few, they carved no hopeful verse upon his tombstone, for his dying hour was gloom.

THE BIRTHMARK

(1843)

"The Birthmark" was first published in Lowell's ill-fated *Pioneer* in March, 1843. It was included in Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse* (1846). The theme of the story is recorded in two entries in the

American Note-Books "A person to be in possession of something as perfect as mortal man has a right to demand, he tries to make it better, and ruins it entirely" and "A person to be the death of his beloved in trying to raise her to more than mortal perfection, yet this should be a comfort to him for having aimed so highly and holily." "Aminadab," as Austin Warren suggests, "is a reminiscence of Caliban, and plays the same rôle relative to Aylmer that the brute bears as servant to Prospero in *The Tempest*." Note also the following passage from Randall Stewart's edition of *The American Notebooks*:

"The case quoted in Combe's *Physiology*, from Pinel, of a young man of great talents and profound knowledge of chemistry, who had in view some new discovery of importance. In order to put his mind into the highest possible activity, he shut himself up, for several successive days, and used various methods of excitement; he had a singing girl with him; he drank spirits; smelled penetrating odors, sprinkled cologne-water round the room &c. &c. Eight days thus passed, when he was seized with a fit of frenzy, which terminated in mania."

In the latter part of the last century there lived a man of science, an eminent proficient in every branch of natural philosophy, who not long before our story opens had made experience of a spiritual affinity more attractive than any chemical one. He had left his laboratory to the care of an assistant, cleared his fine countenance from the furnace smoke, washed the stain of acids from his fingers, and persuaded a beautiful woman to become his wife. In those days when the comparatively recent discovery of electricity and other kindred mysteries of Nature seemed to open paths into the region of miracle, it was not unusual for the love of science to rival the love of woman in its depth and absorbing energy. The higher intellect, the imagination, the spirit, and even the heart might all find their congenial aliment in pursuits which, as some of their ardent votaries believed, would ascend from one step of powerful intelligence to another, until the philosopher should lay his hand on the secret of creative force and perhaps make new worlds for himself. We know not whether Aylmer possessed this degree of faith in man's ultimate control over Nature. He had devoted himself, however, too unreservedly to scientific studies ever to be weaned from them by any second passion. His love for his young wife might prove the stronger of the two; but it could only be by intertwining

itself with his love of science, and uniting the strength of the latter to his own.

Such a union accordingly took place, and was attended with truly remarkable consequences and a deeply impressive moral. One day, very soon after their marriage, Aylmer sat gazing at his wife with a trouble in his countenance that grew stronger until he spoke.

"Georgiana," said he, "has it never occurred to you that the mark upon your cheek might be removed?"

"No, indeed," said she smiling, but perceiving the seriousness of his manner, she blushed deeply. "To tell you the truth it has been so often called a charm that I was simple enough to imagine it might be so."

"Ah, upon another face perhaps it might," replied her husband; "but never on yours. No, dearest Georgiana, you came so nearly perfect from the hand of Nature that this slightest possible defect, which we hesitate whether to term a defect or a beauty, shocks me, as being the visible mark of earthly imperfection."

"Shocks you, my husband!" cried Georgiana, deeply hurt; at first reddening with momentary anger, but then bursting into tears. "Then why did you take me from my mother's side? You cannot love what shocks you!"

To explain this conversation it must be mentioned that in the centre of Georgiana's left cheek there was a singular mark, deeply interwoven, as it were, with the texture and substance of her face. In the usual state of her complexion—a healthy though delicate bloom—the mark wore a tint of deeper crimson, which imperfectly defined its shape amid the surrounding rosiness. When she blushed it gradually became more indistinct, and finally vanished amid the triumphant rush of blood that bathed the whole cheek with its brilliant glow. But if any shifting motion caused her to turn pale, there was the mark again, a crimson stain upon the snow, in what Aylmer sometimes deemed an almost fearful distinctness. Its shape bore not a little similarity to the human hand, though of the smallest pygmy size. Georgiana's lovers were wont to say that some fairy at her birth hour had laid her tiny hand upon the infant's cheek, and left this impress there in token of the magic endowments that were to give her such sway over all hearts. Many a desperate swain would have risked life for the privilege of pressing his lips to the mys-

terious hand. It must not be concealed, however, that the impression wrought by this fairy sign manual varied exceedingly, according to the difference of temperament in the beholders. Some fastidious persons—but they were exclusively of her own sex—affirmed that the bloody hand, as they chose to call it, quite destroyed the effect of Georgiana's beauty, and rendered her countenance even hideous. But it would be as reasonable to say that one of those small blue stains which sometimes occur in the purest statuary marble would convert the Eve of Powers to a monster. Masculine observers, if the birthmark did not heighten their admiration, contented themselves with wishing it away, that the world might possess one living specimen of ideal loveliness without the semblance of a flaw. After his marriage,—for he thought little or nothing of the matter before,—Aylmer discovered that this was the case with himself.

Had she been less beautiful,—if Envy's self could have found aught else to sneer at,—he might have felt his affection heightened by the prettiness of this mimic hand, now vaguely portrayed, now lost, now stealing forth again and glimmering to and fro with every pulse of emotion that throbbed within her heart; but seeing her otherwise so perfect, he found this one defect grow more and more intolerable with every moment of their united lives. It was the fatal flaw of humanity which Nature, in one shape or another, stamps ineffaceably on all her productions, either to imply that they are temporary and finite, or that their perfection must be wrought by toil and pain. The crimson hand expressed the ineludible gripe in which mortality clutches the highest and purest of earthly mould, degrading them into kindred with the lowest, and even with the very brutes, like whom their visible frames return to dust. In this manner, selecting it as the symbol of his wife's liability to sin, sorrow, decay, and death, Aylmer's sombre imagination was not long in rendering the birthmark a frightful object, causing him more trouble and horror than ever Georgiana's beauty, whether of soul or sense, had given him delight.

At all the seasons which should have been their happiest, he invariably and without intending it, nay, in spite of a purpose to the contrary, reverted to this one disastrous topic. Trifling as it at first appeared, it so connected

itself with innumerable trains of thought and modes of feeling that it became the central point of all. With the morning twilight Aylmer opened his eyes upon his wife's face and recognized the symbol of imperfection; and when they sat together at the evening hearth his eyes wandered stealthily to her cheek, and beheld, flickering with the blaze of the wood fire, the spectral hand that wrote mortality where he would fain have worshipped. Georgiana soon learned to shudder at his gaze. It needed but a glance with the peculiar expression that his face often wore to change the roses of her cheek into a deathlike paleness, amid which the crimson hand was brought strongly out, like a bas-relief of ruby on the whitest marble.

Late one night when the lights were growing dim, so as hardly to betray the stain on the poor wife's cheek, she herself, for the first time, voluntarily took up the subject.

"Do you remember, my dear Aylmer," said she, with a feeble attempt at a smile, "have you any recollection of a dream last night about this odious hand?"

"None! none whatever!" replied Aylmer, starting, but then he added, in a dry, cold tone, affected for the sake of concealing the real depth of his emotion, "I might well dream of it; for before I fell asleep it had taken a pretty firm hold of my fancy."

"And you did dream of it?" continued Georgiana, hastily, for she dreaded lest a gush of tears should interrupt what she had to say. "A terrible dream! I wonder that you can forget it. Is it possible to forget this one expression?—'It is in her heart now; we must have it out!' Reflect, my husband; for by all means I would have you recall that dream."

The mind is in a sad state when Sleep, the all-involving, cannot confine her spectres within the dim region of her sway, but suffers them to break forth, affrighting this actual life with secrets that perchance belong to a deeper one. Aylmer now remembered his dream. He had fancied himself with his servant Aminadab, attempting an operation for the removal of the birthmark; but the deeper went the knife, the deeper sank the hand, until at length its tiny grasp appeared to have caught hold of Georgiana's heart; whence, however, her husband was inexorably resolved to cut or wrench it away.

When the dream had shaped itself perfectly

in his memory, Aylmer sat in his wife's presence with a guilty feeling. Truth often finds its way to the mind close muffled in robes of sleep, and then speaks with uncompromising directness of matters in regard to which we practise an unconscious self-deception during our waking moments. Until now he had not been aware of the tyrannizing influence acquired by one idea over his mind, and of the lengths which he might find in his heart to go for the sake of giving himself peace.

"Aylmer," resumed Georgiana, solemnly, "I know not what may be the cost to both of us to rid me of this fatal birthmark. Perhaps its removal may cause cureless deformity, or it may be the stain goes as deep as life itself. Again: do we know that there is a possibility, on any terms, of unclasping the firm gripe of this little hand which was laid upon me before I came into the world?"

"Dearest Georgiana, I have spent much thought upon the subject," hastily interrupted Aylmer. "I am convinced of the perfect practicability of its removal."

"If there be the remotest possibility of it," continued Georgiana, "let the attempt be made at whatever risk. Danger is nothing to me; for life, while this hateful mark makes me the object of your horror and disgust,—life is a burden which I would fling down with joy. Either remove this dreadful hand, or take my wretched life! You have deep science. All the world bears witness of it. You have achieved great wonders. Cannot you remove this little, little mark, which I cover with the tips of two small fingers? Is this beyond your power, for the sake of your own peace, and to save your poor wife from madness?"

"Noblest, dearest, tenderest wife," cried Aylmer rapturously, "doubt not my power. I have already given this matter the deepest thought—thought which might almost have enlightened me to create a being less perfect than yourself. Georgiana, you have led me deeper than ever into the heart of science. I feel myself fully competent to render this dear cheek as faultless as its fellow; and then, most beloved, what will be my triumph when I shall have corrected what Nature left imperfect in her fairest work! Even Pygmalion, when his sculptured woman assumed life, felt not greater ecstasy than mine will be."

"It is resolved, then," said Georgiana, faintly

smiling. "And, Aylmer, spare me not, though you should find the birthmark take refuge in my heart at last."

Her husband tenderly kissed her cheek—her right cheek—not that which bore the impress of the crimson hand.

The next day Aylmer apprised his wife of a plan that he had formed whereby he might have opportunity for the intense thought and constant watchfulness which the proposed operation would require; while Georgiana, likewise, would enjoy the perfect repose essential to its success. They were to seclude themselves in the extensive apartments occupied by Aylmer as a laboratory, and where, during his toilsome youth, he had made discoveries in the elemental powers of Nature that had roused the admiration of all the learned societies in Europe. Seated calmly in this laboratory, the pale philosopher had investigated the secrets of the highest cloud region and of the profoundest mines; he had satisfied himself of the causes that kindled and kept alive the fires of the volcano; and had explained the mystery of fountains, and how it is that they gush forth, some so bright and pure, and others with such rich medicinal virtues, from the dark bosom of the earth. Here, too, at an earlier period, he had studied the wonders of the human frame, and attempted to fathom the very process by which Nature assimilates all her precious influences from earth and air, and from the spiritual world, to create and foster man, her masterpiece. The latter pursuit, however, Aylmer had long laid aside in unwilling recognition of the truth—against which all seekers sooner or later stumble—that our great creative Mother, while she amuses us with apparently working in the broadest sunshine, is yet severely careful to keep her own secrets, and, in spite of her pretended openness, shows us nothing but results. She permits us, indeed, to mar, but seldom to mend, and, like a jealous patentee, on no account to make. Now, however, Aylmer resumed these half-forgotten investigations,—not, of course, with such hopes or wishes as first suggested them, but because they involved much physiological truth and lay in the path of his proposed scheme for the treatment of Georgiana.

As he led her over the threshold of the laboratory, Georgiana was cold and tremulous. Aylmer looked cheerfully into her face, with intent to reassure her, but was so startled with the in-

tense glow of the birthmark upon the whiteness of her cheek that he could not restrain a strong convulsive shudder. His wife fainted

"Aminadab! Aminadab!" shouted Aylmer, stamping violently on the floor.

Forthwith their issued from an inner apartment a man of low stature, but bulky frame, with shaggy hair hanging about his visage, which was grimed with the vapors of the furnace. This personage had been Aylmer's underworker during his whole scientific career, and was admirably fitted for that office by his great mechanical readiness, and the skill with which, while incapable of comprehending a single principle, he executed all the details of his master's experiments. With his vast strength, his shaggy hair, his smoky aspect, and the indescribable earthiness that incrustated him, he seemed to represent man's physical nature while Aylmer's slender figure, and pale, intellectual face, were no less apt a type of the spiritual element.

"Throw open the door of the boudoir, Aminadab," said Aylmer, "and burn a pastil."

"Yes, master," answered Aminadab, looking intently at the lifeless form of Georgiana, and then he muttered to himself, "If she were my wife, I'd never part with that birthmark."

When Georgiana recovered consciousness she found herself breathing an atmosphere of penetrating fragrance, the gentle potency of which had recalled her from her deathlike faintness. The scene around her looked like enchantment. Aylmer had converted those smoky, dingy, sombre rooms, where he had spent his brightest years in recondite pursuits, into a series of beautiful apartments not unfit to be the secluded abode of a lovely woman. The walls were hung with gorgeous curtains, which imparted the combination of grandeur and grace that no other species of adornment can achieve; and as they fell from the ceiling to the floor, their rich and ponderous folds, concealing all angles and straight lines, appeared to shut in the scene from infinite space. For aught Georgiana knew, it might be a pavilion among the clouds. And Aylmer, excluding the sunshine, which would have interfered with his chemical processes, had supplied its place with perfumed lamps, emitting flames of various hue, but all uniting in a soft, impurpled radiance. He now knelt by his wife's side, watching her earnestly, but without alarm; for he was confident in his science, and felt that

he could draw a magic circle round her within which no evil might intrude

"Where am I? Ah, I remember," said Georgiana, faintly; and she placed her hand over her cheek to hide the terrible mark from her husband's eyes.

"Fear not, dearest!" exclaimed he. "Do not shrink from me! Believe me, Georgiana, I even rejoice in this single imperfection, since it will be such a rapture to remove it."

"Oh, spare me!" sadly replied his wife. "Pray do not look at it again. I never can forget that convulsive shudder"

In order to soothe Georgiana, and, as it were, to release her mind from the burden of actual things, Aylmer now put in practice some of the light and playful secrets which science had taught him among its profounder lore. Airy figures, absolutely bodiless ideas, and forms of unsubstantial beauty came and danced before her, imprinting their momentary footsteps on beams of light. Though she had some indistinct idea of the method of these optical phenomena, still the illusion was almost perfect enough to warrant the belief that her husband possessed sway over the spiritual world. Then again, when she felt a wish to look forth from her seclusion, immediately, as if her thoughts were answered, the procession of external existence flitted across a screen. The scenery and the figures of actual life were perfectly represented, but with that bewitching, yet indescribable difference which always makes a picture, an image, or a shadow so much more attractive than the original. When wearied of this, Aylmer bade her cast her eyes upon a vessel containing a quantity of earth. She did so, with little interest at first, but was soon startled to perceive the germ of a plant shooting upward from the soil. Then came the slender stalk; the leaves gradually unfolded themselves; and amid them was a perfect and lovely flower.

"It is magical!" cried Georgiana. "I dare not touch it."

"Nay, pluck it," answered Aylmer: "pluck it, and inhale its brief perfume while you may. The flower will wither in a few moments and leave nothing save its brown seed vessels; but thence may be perpetuated a race as ephemeral as itself."

But Georgiana had no sooner touched the flower than the whole plant suffered a blight,

its leaves turning coal-black as if by the agency of fire.

"There was too powerful a stimulus," said Aylmer, thoughtfully.

To make up for this abortive experiment, he proposed to take her portrait by a scientific process of his own invention. It was to be effected by rays of light striking upon a polished plate of metal. Georgiana assented, but, on looking at the result, was affrighted to find the features of the portrait blurred and indefinable, while the minute figure of a hand appeared where the cheek should have been. Aylmer snatched the metallic plate and threw it into a jar of corrosive acid.

Soon, however, he forgot these mortifying failures. In the intervals of study and chemical experiment he came to her flushed and exhausted, but seemed invigorated by her presence, and spoke in glowing language of the resources of his art. He gave a history of the long dynasty of the alchemists, who spent so many ages in quest of the universal solvent by which the golden principle might be elicited from all things vile and base. Aylmer appeared to believe that, by the plainest scientific logic, it was altogether within the limits of possibility to discover this long-sought medium; "but," he added, "a philosopher who should go deep enough to acquire the power would attain too lofty a wisdom to stoop to the exercise of it." Not lesser singular were his opinions in regard to the elixir vitæ. He more than intimated that it was his option to concoct a liquid that should prolong life for years, perhaps interminably; but that it would produce a discord in Nature which all the world, and chiefly the quaffer of the immortal nostrum, would find cause to curse.

"Aylmer, are you in earnest?" asked Georgiana, looking at him with amazement and fear. "It is terrible to possess such power, or even to dream of possessing it."

"Oh, do not tremble, my love," said her husband. "I would not wrong either you or myself by working such inharmonious effects upon our lives; but I would have you consider how trifling, in comparison, is the skill requisite to remove this little hand."

At the mention of the birthmark, Georgiana, as usual, shrank as if a red-hot iron had touched her cheek.

Again Aylmer applied himself to his labors.

She could hear his voice in the distant furnace room giving directions to Aminadab, whose harsh, uncouth, misshapen tones were audible in response, more like the grunt or growl of a brute than human speech. After hours of absence, Aylmer reappeared and proposed that she should now examine his cabinet of chemical products and natural treasures of the earth. Among the former he showed her a small vial, in which, he remarked, was contained a gentle yet most powerful fragrance, capable of impregnating all the breezes that blow across the kingdom. They were of inestimable value, the contents of that little vial, and, as he said so, he threw some of the perfume into the air and filled the room with piercing and invigorating delight.

"And what is this?" asked Georgiana, pointing to a small crystal globe containing a gold-colored liquid. "It is so beautiful to the eye that I could imagine it the elixir of life."

"In one sense it is," replied Aylmer; "or, rather, the elixir of immortality. It is the most precious poison that ever was concocted in this world. By its aid I could apportion the lifetime of any mortal at whom you might point your finger. The strength of the dose would determine whether he were to linger out years, or drop dead in the midst of a breath. No king on his guarded throne could keep his life if I, in my private station, should deem that the welfare of millions justified me in depriving him of it."

"Why do you keep such a terrific drug?" inquired Georgiana in horror.

"Do not distrust me, dearest," said her husband, smiling; "its virtuous potency is yet greater than its harmful one. But see! here is a powerful cosmetic. With a few drops of this in a vase of water, freckles may be washed away as easily as the hands are cleaned. A stronger infusion would take the blood out of the cheek, and leave the rosiest beauty a pale ghost."

"Is it with this lotion that you intend to bathe my cheek?" asked Georgiana anxiously.

"Oh, no," hastily replied her husband; "this is merely superficial. Your case demands a remedy that shall go deeper."

In his interviews with Georgiana, Aylmer generally made minute inquiries as to her sensations and whether the confinement of the rooms and the temperature of the atmosphere agreed with her. These questions had such a particular

drift that Georgiana began to conjecture that she was already subjected to certain physical influences, either breathed in with the fragrant air or taken with her food. She fancied likewise, but it might be altogether fancy, that there was a stirring up of her system—a strange, indefinite sensation creeping through her veins, and tingling, half painfully, half pleurably, at her heart. Still, whenever she dared to look into the mirror, there she beheld herself pale as a white rose and with the crimson birthmark stamped upon her cheek. Not even Aylmer now hated it so much as she.

To dispel the tedium of the hours which her husband found it necessary to devote to the processes of combination and analysis, Georgiana turned over the volumes of his scientific library. In many dark old tomes she met with chapters full of romance and poetry. They were the works of the philosophers of the middle ages, such as Albertus Magnus, Cornelius Agrippa, Paracelsus, and the famous friar who created the prophetic Brazen Head. All these antique naturalists stood in advance of their centuries, yet were imbued with some of their credulity, and therefore were believed, and perhaps imagined themselves to have acquired from the investigation of Nature a power over Nature, and from physics a sway over the spiritual world. Hardly less curious and imaginative were the early volumes of the Transactions of the Royal Society, in which the members, knowing little of the limits of natural possibility, were continually recording wonders or proposing methods whereby wonders might be wrought.

But to Georgiana the most engrossing volume was a large folio from her husband's own hand, in which he had recorded every experiment of his scientific career, its original aim, the methods adopted for its development, and its final success or failure, with the circumstances to which either event was attributable. The book, in truth, was both the history and emblem of his ardent, ambitious, imaginative, yet practical and laborious life. He handled physical details as if there were nothing beyond them; yet spiritualized them all, and redeemed himself from materialism by his strong and eager aspiration towards the infinite. In his grasp the veriest clod of earth assumed a soul. Georgiana, as she read, revered Aylmer and loved him more profoundly than ever, but with a less entire de-

pendence on his judgment than heretofore. Much as he had accomplished, she could not but observe that his most splendid successes were almost invariably failures, if compared with the ideal at which he aimed. His brightest diamonds were the merest pebbles, and felt to be so by himself, in comparison with the inestimable gems which lay hidden beyond his reach. The volume, rich with achievements that had won renown for its author, was yet as melancholy a record as ever mortal hand had penned. It was the sad confession and continual exemplification of the shortcomings of the composite man, the spirit burdened with clay and working in matter, and of the despair that assails the higher nature at finding itself so miserably thwarted by the earthly part. Perhaps every man of genius in whatever sphere might recognize the image of his own experience in Aylmer's journal.

So deeply did these reflections affect Georgiana that she laid her face upon the open volume and burst into tears. In this situation she was found by her husband.

"It is dangerous to read in a sorcerer's books," said he with a smile, though his countenance was uneasy and displeased. "Georgiana, there are pages in that volume which I can scarcely glance over and keep my senses. Take heed lest it prove as detrimental to you."

"It has made me worship you more than ever," said she.

"Ah, wait for this one success," rejoined he, "then worship me if you will. I shall deem myself hardly unworthy of it. But come, I have sought you for the luxury of your voice. Sing to me, dearest."

So she poured out the liquid music of her voice to quench the thirst of his spirit. He then took his leave with a boyish exuberance of gaiety, assuring her that her seclusion would endure but a little longer, and that the result was already certain. Scarcely had he departed when Georgiana felt irresistibly impelled to follow him. She had forgotten to inform Aylmer of a symptom which for two or three hours past had begun to excite her attention. It was a sensation in the fatal birthmark, not painful, but which induced a restlessness throughout her system. Hastening after her husband, she intruded for the first time into the laboratory.

The first thing that struck her eye was the furnace, that hot and feverish worker, with the

intense glow of its fire, which by the quantities of soot clustered above it seemed to have been burning for ages. There was a distilling apparatus in full operation. Around the room were retorts, tubes, cylinders, crucibles, and other apparatus of chemical research. An electrical machine stood ready for immediate use. The atmosphere felt oppressively close, and was tainted with gaseous odors which had been tormented forth by the processes of science. The severe and homely simplicity of the apartment, with its naked walls and brick pavement, looked strange, accustomed as Georgiana had become to the fantastic elegance of her boudoir. But what chiefly, indeed almost solely, drew her attention was the aspect of Aylmer himself.

He was pale as death, anxious and absorbed, and hung over the furnace as if it depended upon his utmost watchfulness whether the liquid which it was distilling should be the draught of immortal happiness or misery. How different from the sanguine and joyous mien that he had assumed for Georgiana's encouragement!

"Carefully now, Aminadab, carefully, thou human machine, carefully, thou man of clay!" muttered Aylmer, more to himself than his assistant. "Now, if there be a thought too much or too little, it is all over."

"Ho! ho!" mumbled Aminadab. "Look, master, look!"

Aylmer raised his eyes hastily, and at first reddened, then grew paler than ever, on beholding Georgiana. He rushed towards her and seized her arm with a gripe that left the print of his fingers upon it.

"Why do you come hither? Have you no trust in your husband?" cried he, impetuously. "Would you throw the blight of that fatal birthmark over my labors? It is not well done. Go, prying woman, go!"

"Nay, Aylmer," said Georgiana with the firmness of which she possessed no stinted endowment, "it is not you that have a right to complain. You mistrust your wife; you have concealed the anxiety with which you watch the development of this experiment. Think not so unworthily of me, my husband. Tell me all the risk we run, and fear not that I shall shrink; for my share in it is far less than your own."

"No, no, Georgian!," said Aylmer, impatiently; "it must not be."

"I submit," replied she calmly. "And, Ayl-

mer, I shall quaff whatever draught you bring me; but it will be on the same principle that would induce me to take a dose of poison if offered by your hand."

"My noble wife," said Aylmer, deeply moved; "I knew not the height and depth of your nature until now. Nothing shall be concealed. Know, then, that this crimson hand, superficial as it seems, has clutched its grasp into your being with a strength of which I had no previous conception. I have already administered agents powerful enough to do aught except to change your entire physical system. Only one thing remains to be tried. If that fails us we are ruined."

"Why did you hesitate to tell me this?" asked she.

"Because, Georgiana," said Aylmer, in a low voice, "there is danger."

"Danger? There is but one danger—that this horrible stigma shall be left upon my cheek!" cried Georgiana. "Remove it, remove it, whatever be the cost, or we shall both go mad!"

"Heaven knows your words are too true," said Aylmer, sadly. "And now, dearest, return to your boudoir. In a little while all will be tested."

He conducted her back and took leave of her with a solemn tenderness which spoke far more than his words how much was now at stake. After his departure Georgiana became rapt in musings. She considered the character of Aylmer, and did it completer justice than at any previous moment. Her heart exulted, while it trembled, at his honorable love—so pure and lofty that it would accept nothing less than perfection nor miserably make itself contented with an earthlier nature than he had dreamed of. She felt how much more precious was such a sentiment than that meaner kind which would have borne with the imperfection for her sake, and have been guilty of treason to holy love by degrading its perfect idea to the level of the actual; and with her whole spirit she prayed that, for a single moment, she might satisfy his highest and deepest conception. Longer than one moment she well knew it could not be; for his spirit was ever on the march, ever ascending, and each instant required something that was beyond the scope of the instant before.

The sound of her husband's footsteps aroused her. He bore a crystal goblet containing a liquor

colorless as water, but bright enough to be the draught of immortality. Aylmer was pale, but it seemed rather the consequence of a highly-wrought state of mind and tension of spirit than of fear or doubt.

"The concoction of the draught has been perfect," said he, in answer to Georgiana's look. "Unless all my science have deceived me, it cannot fail."

"Save on your account, my dearest Aylmer," observed his wife, "I might wish to put off this birthmark of mortality by relinquishing mortality itself in preference to any other mode. Life is but a sad possession to those who have attained precisely the degree of moral advancement at which I stand. Were I weaker and blinder it might be happiness. Were I stronger, it might be endured hopefully. But, being what I find myself, methinks I am of all mortals the most fit to die."

"You are fit for heaven without tasting death!" replied her husband. "But why do we speak of dying? The draught cannot fail. Behold its effect upon this plant."

On the window seat there stood a geranium diseased with yellow blotches, which had overspread all its leaves. Aylmer poured a small quantity of the liquid upon the soil in which it grew. In a little time, when the roots of the plant had taken up the moisture, the unsightly blotches began to be extinguished in a living verdure.

"There needed no proof," said Georgiana, quietly. "Give me the goblet. I joyfully stake all upon your word."

"Drink, then, thou lofty creature!" exclaimed Aylmer, with fervid admiration. "There is no taint of imperfection on thy spirit. Thy sensible frame, too, shall soon be all perfect."

She quaffed the liquid and returned the goblet to his hand.

"It is grateful," said she with a placid smile. "Methinks it is like water from a heavenly fountain; for it contains I know not what of unobtrusive fragrance and deliciousness. It allays a feverish thirst that had parched me for many days. Now, dearest, let me sleep. My earthly senses are closing over my spirit like the leaves around the heart of a rose at sunset."

She spoke the last words with a gentle reluctance, as if it required almost more energy than she could command to pronounce the faint and lingering syllables. Scarcely had they loitered

through her lips ere she was lost in slumber. Aylmer sat by her side, watching her aspect with the emotions proper to a man the whole value of whose existence was involved in the process now to be tested. Mingled with this mood, however, was the philosophic investigation characteristic of the man of science. Not the minutest symptom escaped him. A heightened flush of the cheek, a slight irregularity of breath, a quiver of the eyelid, a hardly perceptible tremor through the frame,—such were the details which, as the moments passed, he wrote down in his folio volume. Intense thought had set its stamp upon every previous page of that volume, but the thoughts of years were all concentrated upon the last.

While thus employed, he failed not to gaze often at the fatal hand, and not without a shudder. Yet once, by a strange and unaccountable impulse, he pressed it with his lips. His spirit recoiled, however, in the very act; and Georgiana, out of the midst of her deep sleep, moved uneasily and murmured as if in remonstrance. Again Aylmer resumed his watch. Nor was it without avail. The crimson hand, which at first had been strongly visible upon the marble paleness of Georgiana's cheek, now grew more faintly outlined. She remained not less pale than ever; but the birthmark, with every breath that came and went, lost somewhat of its former distinctness. Its presence had been awful; its departure was more awful still. Watch the stain of the rainbow fading out of the sky, and you will know how that mysterious symbol passed away.

"By Heaven! it is well-nigh gone!" said Aylmer to himself, in almost irrepressible ecstasy. "I can scarcely trace it now. Success! success! And now it is like the faintest rose color. The lightest flush of blood across her cheek would overcome it. But she is so pale!"

He drew aside the window curtain and suffered the light of natural day to fall into the room and rest upon her cheek. At the same time he heard a gross, hoarse chuckle, which he had long known as his servant Aminadab's expression of delight.

"Ah, clod! ah, earthly mass!" cried Aylmer, laughing in a sort of frenzy, "you have served me well! Matter and spirit—earth and heaven—have both done their part in this! Laugh, thing of the senses! You have earned the right to laugh."

These exclamations broke Georgiana's sleep. She slowly unclosed her eyes and gazed into the mirror which her husband had arranged for that purpose. A faint smile flitted over her lips when she recognized how barely perceptible was now that crimson hand which had once blazed forth with such disastrous brilliancy as to scare away all their happiness. But then her eyes sought Aylmer's face with a trouble and anxiety that he could by no means account for.

"My poor Aylmer!" murmured she.

"Poor? Nay, richest, happiest, most favored!" exclaimed he. "My peerless bride, it is success—full! You are perfect!"

"My poor Aylmer," she repeated, with a more than human tenderness, "you have aimed loftily, you have done nobly. Do not repent that with so high and pure a feeling, you have rejected the best the earth could offer, Aylmer, dearest Aylmer, I am dying!"

Alas! it was too true! The fatal hand had grappled with the mystery of life, and was the bond by which an angelic spirit kept itself in union with a mortal frame. As the last crimson tint of the birthmark—that sole token of human imperfection—faded from her cheek, the parting breath of the now perfect woman passed into the atmosphere, and her soul, lingering a moment near her husband, took its heavenward flight. Then a hoarse, chuckling laugh was heard again! Thus ever does the gross fatality of earth exult in its invariable triumph over the immortal essence which, in this dim sphere of half development, demands the completeness of a higher state. Yet, had Aylmer reached a profounder wisdom, he need not thus have flung away the happiness which would have woven his mortal life of the self-same texture with the celestial. The momentary circumstance was too strong for him; he failed to look beyond the shadowy scope of time, and, living once for all in eternity, to find the perfect future in the present.

RAPPACCINI'S DAUGHTER

from the WRITINGS OF AUBÉPINE

(1844)

This story first appeared in the *United States Magazine and Democratic Review* for December, 1844. It was republished in *Mosses from an Old Manse* (1846) with the subtitle "From the Writings of

Aubépine" (*Aubépine* is French for *hawthorn*). Two entries in Hawthorne's notebooks foreshadow the story. The first, somewhat inaccurately quoted from Sir Thomas Browne, should read "A story there passeth of an Indian King, that sent unto Alexander [the Great] a fair woman fed with Aconites and other poisons, with this intent, either by converse or copulation complexionally to destroy him." The other passage reads:

"Madame Calderon de la B (in *Life in Mexico*) speaks of persons who have been inoculated with the venom of rattlesnakes, by pricking them in various places with the tooth. These persons are thus secured forever after against the bite of any venomous reptile. They have the power of calling snakes, and feel great pleasure in playing with and handling them. Their own bite becomes poisonous to people not inoculated in the same manner. Thus a part of the serpent's nature appears to be transfused into them."

The second passage strongly suggests also Holmes's *Elsie Venner*, which was not published until 1861.

We do not remember to have seen any translated specimens of the productions of M. de l'Aubépine—a fact the less to be wondered at, as his very name is unknown to many of his own countrymen as well as to the student of foreign literature. As a writer, he seems to occupy an unfortunate position between the Transcendentalists (who, under one name or another, have then share in all the current literature of the world) and the great body of pen-and-ink men who address the intellect and sympathies of the multitude. If not too refined, at all events too remote, too shadowy, and unsubstantial in his modes of development to suit the taste of the latter class, and yet too popular to satisfy the spiritual or metaphysical requisitions of the former, he must necessarily find himself without an audience, except here and there an individual or possibly an isolated clique. His writings, to do them justice, are not altogether destitute of fancy and originality; they might have won him greater reputation but for an inveterate love of allegory, which is apt to invest his plots and characters with the aspect of scenery and people in the clouds, and to steal away the human warmth out of his conceptions. His fictions are sometimes historical, sometimes of the present day, and sometimes, so far as can be discovered, have little or no reference either to time or space. In any case, he generally contents himself with a very slight embroidery of outward manners—the faintest possible counterfeit of real life,—and endeavors to create an interest by some less obvious peculiarity of the subject. Occasionally a breath of Nature, a raindrop of pathos and tenderness, or a gleam of humor, will find its way into the midst of his fantastic imagery, and make us feel as

if, after all, we were yet within the limits of our native earth. We will only add to this very cursory notice that M. de l'Aubépine's productions, if the reader chance to take them in precisely the proper point of view, may amuse a leisure hour as well as those of a brighter man, if otherwise, they can hardly fail to look excessively like nonsense---

A young man, named Giovanni Guasconti, came, very long ago, from the more southern region of Italy, to pursue his studies at the University of Padua. Giovanni, who had but a scanty supply of gold ducats in his pocket, took lodgings in a high and gloomy chamber of an old edifice which looked not unworthy to have been the palace of a Paduan noble, and which, in fact, exhibited over its entrance the armorial bearings of a family long since extinct. The young stranger, who was not unstudied in the great poem of his country, recollected that one of the ancestors of this family, and perhaps an occupant of this very mansion, had been pictured by Dante as a partaker of the immortal agonies of his Inferno. These reminiscences and associations, together with the tendency to heartbreak natural to a young man for the first time out of his native sphere, caused Giovanni to sigh heavily as he looked around the desolate and ill-furnished apartment.

"Holy Virgin, signor!" cried old Dame Lisabetta, who, won by the youth's remarkable beauty of person, was kindly endeavoring to give the chamber a habitable air, "what a sigh was that to come out of a young man's heart! Do you find this old mansion gloomy? For the love of Heaven, then, put your head out of the window, and you will see as bright sunshine as you have left in Naples."

Guasconti mechanically did as the old woman advised, but could not quite agree with her that the Paduan sunshine was as cheerful as that of southern Italy. Such as it was, however, it fell upon a garden beneath the window and expended its fostering influences on a variety of plants, which seemed to have been cultivated with exceeding care.

"Does this garden belong to the house?" asked Giovanni.

"Heaven forbid, signor, unless it were fruitful of better pot herbs than any that grow there now," answered old Lisabetta. "No; that garden is cultivated by the own hands of Signor Giacomo Rappaccini, the famous doctor, who, I

warrant him, has been heard of as far as Naples. It is said that he distills these plants into medicines that are as potent as a charm. Oftentimes you may see the signor doctor at work, and perchance the signora, his daughter, too, gathering the strange flowers that grow in the garden."

The old woman had now done what she could for the aspect of the chamber; and, commending the young man to the protection of the saints, took her departure.

Giovanni still found no better occupation than to look down into the garden beneath his window. From its appearance, he judged it to be one of those botanic gardens which were of earlier date in Padua than elsewhere in Italy or in the world. Or, not improbably, it might once have been the pleasure-place of an opulent family, for there was the ruin of a marble fountain in the centre sculptured with rare art, but so wofully shattered that it was impossible to trace the original design from the chaos of remaining fragments. The water, however, continued to gush and sparkle into the sunbeams as cheerfully as ever. A little gurgling sound ascended to the young man's window, and made him feel as if the fountain were an immortal spirit that sung its song unceasingly and without heeding the vicissitudes around it, while one century embodied it in marble and another scattered the perishable garniture on the soil. All about the pool into which the water subsided grew various plants, that seemed to require a plentiful supply of moisture for the nourishment of gigantic leaves, and, in some instances, flowers gorgeously magnificent. There was one shrub in particular, set in a marble vase in the midst of the pool, that bore a profusion of purple blossoms, each of which had the lustre and richness of a gem; and the whole together made a show so resplendent that it seemed enough to illuminate the garden, even had there been no sunshine. Every portion of the soil was peopled with plants and herbs, which, if less beautiful, still bore tokens of assiduous care, as if all had their individual virtues, known to the scientific mind that fostered them. Some were placed in urns, rich with old carving, and others in common garden pots; some crept serpent-like along the ground or climbed on high, using whatever means of ascent was offered them. One plant had wreathed itself round a statue of Vertumnus, which was thus quite veiled and shrouded in a

drapery of hanging foliage, so happily arranged that it might have served a sculptor for a study.

While Giovanni stood at the window he heard a rustling behind a screen of leaves, and became aware that a person was at work in the garden. His figure soon emerged into view, and showed itself to be that of no common laborer, but a tall, emaciated, sallow, and sickly-looking man, dressed in a scholar's garb of black. He was beyond the middle term of life, with gray hair, a thin, gray beard, and a face singularly marked with intellect and cultivation, but which could never, even in his more youthful days, have expressed much warmth of heart.

Nothing could exceed the intentness with which this scientific gardener examined every shrub which grew in his path: it seemed as if he was looking into their inmost nature, making observations in regard to their creative essence, and discovering why one leaf grew in this shape and another in that, and wherefore such and such flowers differed among themselves in hue and perfume. Nevertheless, in spite of this deep intelligence on his part, there was no approach to intimacy between himself and these vegetable existences. On the contrary, he avoided their actual touch or the direct inhaling of their odors with a caution that impressed Giovanni most disagreeably; for the man's demeanor was that of one walking among malignant influences, such as savage beasts, or deadly snakes, or evil spirits, which, should he allow them one moment of license, would wreak upon him some terrible fatality. It was strangely frightful to the young man's imagination to see this air of insecurity in a person cultivating a garden, that most simple and innocent of human toils, and which had been alike the joy and labor of the unfallen parents of the race. Was this garden, then, the Eden of the present world? And this man, with such a perception of harm in what his own hands caused to grow,—was he the Adam?

The distrustful gardener, while plucking away the dead leaves or pruning the too luxuriant growth of the shrubs, defended his hands with a pair of thick gloves. Nor were these his only armor. When, in his walk through the garden, he came to the magnificent plant that hung its purple gems beside the marble fountain, he placed a kind of mask over his mouth and nostrils, as if all this beauty did but conceal a deadlier malice; but, finding his task still too

dangerous, he drew back, removed the mask, and called loudly, but in the infirm voice of a person affected with inward disease.

"Beatrice! Beatrice!"

5 "Here am I, my father. What would you?" cried a rich and youthful voice from the window of the opposite house—a voice as rich as a tropical sunset, and which made Giovanni, though he knew not why, think of deep hues of purple or crimson and of perfumes heavily delectable. 10 "Are you in the garden?"

"Yes, Beatrice," answered the gardener, "and I need your help."

Soon there emerged from under a sculptured 15 portal the figure of a young girl, arrayed with as much richness of taste as the most splendid of the flowers, beautiful as the day, and with a bloom so deep and vivid that one shade more would have been too much. She looked redundant with life, health, and energy; all of which attributes 20 were bound down and compressed, as it were, and girdled tensely, in their luxuriance, by her virgin zone. Yet Giovanni's fancy must have grown morbid while he looked down into the garden; for the impression which the fair stranger made upon him was as if here were another flower, the human sister of those vegetable ones, as beautiful as they, more beautiful than the 25 richest of them, but still to be touched only with a glove, nor to be approached without a mask. As Beatrice came down the garden path, it was observable that she handled and inhaled the odor of several of the plants which her father had most sedulously avoided.

35 "Here, Beatrice," said the latter, "see how many needful offices require to be done to our chief treasure. Yet, shattered as I am, my life might pay the penalty of approaching it so closely as circumstances demand. Henceforth, I 40 fear, this plant must be consigned to your sole charge."

"And gladly will I undertake it," cried again the rich tones of the young lady, as she bent towards the magnificent plant and opened her arms as if to embrace it. "Yes, my sister, my 45 splendor, it shall be Beatrice's task to nurse and serve thee; and thou shalt reward her with thy kisses and perfumed breath, which to her is as the breath of life."

50 Then, with all the tenderness in her manner that was so strikingly expressed in her words, she busied herself with such attentions as the

plant seemed to require, and Giovanni, at his lofty window, rubbed his eyes and almost doubted whether it were a girl tending her favorite flower, or one sister performing the duties of affection to another. The scene soon terminated. Whether Dr. Rappaccini had finished his labors in the garden, or that his watchful eye had caught the stranger's face, he now took his daughter's arm and retired. Night was already closing in; oppressive exhalations seemed to proceed from the plants and steal upward past the open window; and Giovanni, closing the lattice, went to his couch and dreamed of a rich flower and beautiful girl. Flower and maiden were different, and yet the same, and fraught with some strange peril in either shape.

But there is an influence in the light of morning that tends to rectify whatever errors of fancy, or even of judgment, we may have incurred during the sun's decline, or among the shadows of the night, or in the less wholesome glow of moonshine. Giovanni's first movement, on starting from sleep, was to throw open the window and gaze down into the garden which his dreams had made so fertile of mysteries. He was surprised and a little ashamed to find how real and matter-of-fact an affair it proved to be, in the first rays of the sun which gilded the dew-drops that hung upon leaf and blossom, and, while giving a brighter beauty to each rare flower, brought everything within the limits of ordinary experience. The young man rejoiced that, in the heart of the barren city, he had the privilege of overlooking this spot of lovely and luxuriant vegetation. It would serve, he said to himself, as a symbolic language to keep him in communion with Nature. Neither the sickly and thoughtworn Dr. Giacomo Rappaccini, it is true, nor his brilliant daughter, were now visible; so that Giovanni could not determine how much of the singularity which he attributed to both was due to their own qualities and how much to his wonder-working fancy; but he was inclined to take a most rational view of the whole matter.

In the course of the day he paid his respects to Signor Pietro Baglioni, professor of medicine in the university, a physician of eminent repute, to whom Giovanni had brought a letter of introduction. The professor was an elderly personage, apparently of genial nature, and habits that might almost be called jovial. He kept the young man to dinner, and made himself very

agreeable by the freedom and liveliness of his conversation, especially when warmed by a flask or two of Tuscan wine. Giovanni, conceiving that men of science, inhabitants of the same city, must needs be on familiar terms with one another, took an opportunity to mention the name of Dr. Rappaccini. But the professor did not respond with so much cordiality as he had anticipated.

"Ill would it become a teacher of the divine art of medicine," said Professor Pietro Baglioni, in answer to a question of Giovanni, "to withhold due and well-considered praise of a physician so eminently skilled as Rappaccini; but, on the other hand, I should answer it but scantily to my conscience were I to permit a worthy youth like yourself, Signor Giovanni, the son of an ancient friend, to imbibe erroneous ideas respecting a man who might hereafter chance to hold your life and death in his hands. The truth is, our worshipful Dr. Rappaccini has as much science as any member of the faculty—with perhaps one single exception—in Padua, or all Italy; but there are certain grave objections to his professional character."

"And what are they?" asked the young man.

"Has my friend Giovanni any disease of body or heart, that he is so inquisitive about physicians?" said the professor, with a smile. "But as for Rappaccini, it is said of him—and I, who know the man well, can answer for its truth—that he cares infinitely more for science than for mankind. His patients are interesting to him only as subjects for some new experiment. He would sacrifice human life, his own among the rest, or whatever else was dearest to him, for the sake of adding so much as a grain of mustard seed to the great heap of his accumulated knowledge."

"Methinks he is an awful man indeed," remarked Guasconti, mentally recalling the cold and purely intellectual aspect of Rappaccini. "And yet, worshipful professor, is it not a noble spirit? Are there many men capable of so spiritual a love of science?"

"God forbid," answered the professor, somewhat testily; "at least, unless they take sounder views of the healing art than those adopted by Rappaccini. It is his theory that all medicinal virtues are comprised within those substances which we term vegetable poisons. These he cultivates with his own hands, and is said even to

have produced new varieties of poison, more horribly deleterious than Nature, without the assistance of this learned person, would ever have plagued the world withal. That the signor doctor does less mischief than might be expected with such dangerous substances is undeniable. Now and then, it must be owned, he has effected, or seemed to effect, a marvellous cure, but, to tell you my private mind, Signor Giovanni, he should receive little credit for such instances of success,—they being probably the work of chance,—but should be held strictly accountable for his failures, which may justly be considered his own work.”

The youth might have taken Baglioni's opinions with many grains of allowance had he known that there was a professional warfare of long continuance between him and Dr. Rappaccini, in which the latter was generally thought to have gained the advantage. If the reader be inclined to judge for himself, we refer him to certain black-letter tracts on both sides, preserved in the medical department of the University of Padua.

“I know not, most learned professor,” returned Giovanni, after musing on what had been said of Rappaccini's exclusive zeal for science,—“I know not how dearly this physician may love his art; but surely there is one object more dear to him. He has a daughter.”

“Aha!” cried the professor, with a laugh. “So now our friend Giovanni's secret is out. You have heard of this daughter, whom all the young men in Padua are wild about, though not half a dozen have ever had the good hap to see her face. I know little of the Signora Beatrice save that Rappaccini is said to have instructed her deeply in his science, and that, young and beautiful as fame reports her, she is already qualified to fill a professor's chair. Perchance her father destines her for mine! Other absurd rumors there be, not worth talking about or listening to. So now, Signor Giovanni, drink off your glass of lachryma.”

Guasconti returned to his lodgings somewhat heated with the wine he had quaffed, and which caused his brain to swim with strange fantasies in reference to Dr. Rappaccini and the beautiful Beatrice. On his way, happening to pass by a florist's he bought a fresh bouquet of flowers.

Ascending to his chamber, he seated himself near the window, but within the shadow thrown

by the depth of the wall, so that he could look down into the garden with little risk of being discovered. All beneath his eye was a solitude. The strange plants were basking in the sunshine, and now and then nodding gently to one another, as if in acknowledgment of sympathy and kindred. In the midst, by the shattered fountain, grew the magnificent shrub, with its purple gems clustering all over it; they glowed in the air, and gleamed back again out of the depths of the pool, which thus seemed to overflow with colored radiance from the rich reflection that was steeped in it. At first, as we have said, the garden was a solitude. Soon, however,—as Giovanni had half hoped, half feared, would be the case,—a figure appeared beneath the antique sculptured portal, and came down between the rows of plants, inhaling their various perfumes as if she were one of those beings of old classic fable that lived upon sweet odors. On again beholding Beatrice, the young man was even startled to perceive how much her beauty exceeded his recollection of it; so brilliant, so vivid, was its character, that she glowed amid the sunlight, and, as Giovanni whispered to himself, positively illuminated the more shadowy intervals of the garden path. Her face being now more revealed than on the former occasion, he was struck by its expression of simplicity and sweetness,—qualities that had not entered into his idea of her character, and which made him ask anew what manner of mortal she might be. Nor did he fail again to observe, or imagine, an analogy between the beautiful girl and the gorgeous shrub that hung its gemlike flowers over the fountain,—a resemblance which Beatrice seemed to have indulged a fantastic humor in heightening, both by the arrangement of her dress and the selection of its hues.

Approaching the shrub, she threw open her arms, as with a passionate ardor, and drew its branches into an intimate embrace—so intimate that her features were hidden in its leafy bosom and her glistening ringlets all intermingled with the flowers.

“Give me thy breath, my sister,” exclaimed Beatrice; “for I am faint with common air. And give me this flower of thine, which I separate with gentlest fingers from the stem and place it close beside my heart.”

With these words the beautiful daughter of Rappaccini plucked one of the richest blossoms of the shrub, and was about to fasten it in her

bosom. But now, unless Giovanni's draughts of wine had bewildered his senses, a singular incident occurred. A small orange-colored reptile, of the lizard or chameleon species, chanced to be creeping along the path, just at the feet of Beatrice. It appeared to Giovanni,—but, at the distance from which he gazed, he could scarcely have seen anything so minute,—it appeared to him, however, that a drop or two of moisture from the broken stem of the flower descended upon the lizard's head. For an instant the reptile contorted itself violently, and then lay motionless in the sunshine. Beatrice observed this remarkable phenomenon, and crossed herself, sadly, but without surprise; nor did she therefore hesitate to arrange the fatal flower in her bosom. There it blushed, and almost glimmered with the dazzling effect of a precious stone, adding to her dress and aspect the one appropriate charm which nothing else in the world could have supplied. But Giovanni, out of the shadow of his window, bent forward and shrank back, and murmured and trembled.

"Am I awake? Have I my senses?" said he to himself. "What is this being? Beautiful shall I call her, or inexpressibly terrible?"

Beatrice now strayed carelessly through the garden, approaching closer beneath Giovanni's window, so that he was compelled to thrust his head quite out of its concealment in order to gratify the intense and painful curiosity which she excited. At this moment there came a beautiful insect over the garden wall; it had, perhaps, wandered through the city, and found no flowers or verdure among those antique haunts of men until the heavy perfumes of Dr. Rappaccini's shrubs had lured it from afar. Without alighting on the flowers, this winged brightness seemed to be attracted by Beatrice, and lingered in the air and fluttered about her head. Now, here it could not be but that Giovanni Guasconti's eyes deceived him. Be that as it might, he fancied that, while Beatrice was gazing at the insect with childish delight, it grew faint and fell at her feet; its bright wings shivered; it was dead—from no cause that he could discern, unless it were the atmosphere of her breath. Again Beatrice crossed herself and sighed heavily as she bent over the dead insect.

An impulsive movement of Giovanni drew her eyes to the window. There she beheld the beautiful head of the young man—rather a

Grecian than an Italian head, with fair, regular features, and a glistening of gold among his ringlets—gazing down upon her like a being that hovered in mid air. Scarcely knowing what he did, Giovanni threw down the bouquet which he had hitherto held in his hand.

"Signora," said he, "there are pure and healthful flowers. Wear them for the sake of Giovanni Guasconti."

"Thanks, signor," replied Beatrice, with her rich voice, that came forth as it were like a gush of music, and with a mirthful expression half childish and half woman-like. "I accept your gift, and would fain recompense it with this precious purple flower; but if I toss it into the air it will not reach you. So Signor Guasconti must even content himself with my thanks."

She lifted the bouquet from the ground, and then, as if inwardly ashamed at having stepped aside from her maidenly reserve to respond to a stranger's greeting, passed swiftly homeward through the garden. But few as the moments were, it seemed to Giovanni, when she was on the point of vanishing beneath the sculptured portal, that his beautiful bouquet was already beginning to wither in her grasp. It was an idle thought; there could be no possibility of distinguishing a faded flower from a fresh one at so great a distance.

For many days after this incident the young man avoided the window that looked into Dr. Rappaccini's garden, as if something ugly and monstrous would have blasted his eyesight had he been betrayed into a glance. He felt conscious of having put himself, to a certain extent, within the influence of an unintelligible power by the communication which he had opened with Beatrice. The wisest course would have been, if his heart were in any real danger, to quit his lodgings and Padua itself at once; the next wiser, to have accustomed himself, as far as possible, to the familiar and daylight view of Beatrice—thus bringing her rigidly and systematically within the limits of ordinary experience. Least of all, while avoiding her sight, ought Giovanni to have remained so near this extraordinary being that the proximity and possibility even of intercourse should give a kind of substance and reality to the wild vagaries which his imagination ran riot continually in producing. Guasconti had not a deep heart—or, at all events, its depths were not sounded now; but he had a

quick fancy, and an ardent southern temperament, which rose every instant to a higher fever pitch. Whether or no Beatrice possessed those terrible attributes, that fatal breath, the affinity with those so beautiful and deadly flowers which were indicated by what Giovanni had witnessed, she had at least instilled a fierce and subtle poison into his system. It was not love, although her rich beauty was a madness to him; nor horror, even while he fancied her spirit to be imbued with the same baneful essence that seemed to pervade her physical frame; but a wild offspring of both love and horror that had each parent in it, and burned like one and shivered like the other. Giovanni knew not what to dread; still less did he know what to hope, yet hope and dread kept a continual warfare in his breast, alternately vanquishing one another and starting up afresh to renew the contest. Blessed are all simple emotions, be they dark or bright! It is the lurid intermixture of the two that produces the illuminating blaze of the infernal regions.

Sometimes he endeavored to assuage the fever of his spirit by a rapid walk through the streets of Padua or beyond its gates: his footsteps kept time with the throbbings of his brain, so that the walk was apt to accelerate itself to a race. One day he found himself arrested; his arm was seized by a portly personage, who had turned back on recognizing the young man and expended much breath in overtaking him.

"Signor Giovanni! Stay, my young friend!" cried he. "Have you forgotten me? That might well be the case if I were as much altered as yourself."

It was Baglioni, whom Giovanni had avoided ever since their first meeting, from a doubt that the professor's sagacity would look too deeply into his secrets. Endeavoring to recover himself, he stared forth wildly from his inner world into the outer one and spoke like a man in a dream.

"Yes; I am Giovanni Guasconti. You are Professor Pietro Baglioni. Now let me pass!"

"Not yet, not yet, Signor Giovanni Guasconti," said the professor, smiling, but at the same time scrutinizing the youth with an earnest glance. "What! did I grow up side by side with your father? and shall his son pass me like a stranger in these old streets of Padua? Stand still, Signor Giovanni; for we must have a word or two before we part."

"Speedily, then, most worshipful professor,

speedily," said Giovanni, with feverish impatience. "Does not your worship see that I am in haste?"

Now, while he was speaking there came a man in black along the street, stooping and moving feebly like a person in inferior health. His face was all overspread with a most sickly and sallow hue, but yet so pervaded with an expression of piercing and active intellect that an observer might easily have overlooked the merely physical attributes and have seen only this wonderful energy. As he passed, this person exchanged a cold and distant salutation with Baglioni, but fixed his eyes upon Giovanni with an intentness that seemed to bring out whatever was within him worthy of notice. Nevertheless, there was a peculiar quietness in the look, as if taking merely a speculative, not a human, interest in the young man.

"It is Dr. Rappaccini!" whispered the professor when the stranger had passed. "Has he ever seen your face before?"

"Not that I know," answered Giovanni, starting at the name.

"He *has* seen you! he must have seen you!" said Baglioni hastily. "For some purpose or other, this man of science is making a study of you. I know that look of his! It is the same that coldly illuminates his face as he bends over a bird, a mouse, or a butterfly, which, in pursuance of some experiment, he has killed by the perfume of a flower; a look as deep as Nature itself, but without Nature's warmth of love. Signor Giovanni, I will stake my life upon it, you are the subject of one of Rappaccini's experiments!"

"Will you make a fool of me?" cried Giovanni passionately. "*That*, signor professor, were an untoward experiment."

"Patience! patience!" replied the imperturbable professor. "I tell thee, my poor Giovanni, that Rappaccini has a scientific interest in thee. Thou hast fallen into fearful hands! And the Signora Beatrice,—what part does she act in this mystery?"

But Guasconti, finding Baglioni's pertinacity intolerable, here broke away, and was gone before the professor could again seize his arm. He looked after the young man intently and shook his head.

"This must not be," said Baglioni to himself. "The youth is the son of my old friend, and shall not come to any harm from which the

arcana of medical science can preserve him. Besides, it is too insufferable an impertinence in Rappaccini, thus to snatch the lad out of my own hands, as I may say, and make use of him for his infernal experiments. This daughter of his! It shall be looked to. Perchance, most learned Rappaccini, I may foil you where you little dream of it!"

Meanwhile Giovanni had pursued a circuitous route, and at length found himself at the door of his lodgings. As he crossed the threshold he was met by old Lisabetta, who smirked and smiled, and was evidently desirous to attract his attention; vainly, however, as the ebullition of his feelings had momentarily subsided into a cold and dull vacuity. He turned his eyes full upon the withered face that was puckering itself into a smile, but seemed to behold it not. The old dame, therefore, laid her grasp upon his cloak.

"Signor! signor!" whispered she, still with a smile over the whole breadth of her visage, so that it looked not unlike a grotesque carving in wood, darkened by centuries. "Listen, signor! There is a private entrance into the garden!"

"What do you say?" exclaimed Giovanni, turning quickly about, as if an inanimate thing should start into feverish life. "A private entrance into Dr. Rappaccini's garden?"

"Hush! hush! not so loud!" whispered Lisabetta, putting her hand over his mouth. "Yes, into the worshipful doctor's garden, where you may see all his fine shrubbery. Many a young man in Padua would give gold to be admitted among those flowers."

Giovanni put a piece of gold into her hand.

"Show me the way," said he.

A surmise, probably excited by his conversation with Baglioni, crossed his mind, that this interposition of old Lisabetta might perchance be connected with the intrigue, whatever were its nature, in which the professor seemed to suppose that Dr. Rappaccini was involving him. But such a suspicion, though it disturbed Giovanni, was inadequate to restrain him. The instant that he was aware of the possibility of approaching Beatrice, it seemed an absolute necessity of his existence to do so. It mattered not whether she were angel or demon; he was irrevocably within her sphere, and must obey the law that whirled him onward, in ever-lessening circles, towards a result which he did not attempt to foreshadow; and yet, strange to say, there came across him a

sudden doubt whether this intense interest on his part were not delusory; whether it were really of so deep and positive a nature as to justify him in now thrusting himself into an incalculable position, whether it were not merely the fantasy of a young man's brain, only slightly or not at all connected with his heart.

He paused, hesitated, turned half about, but again went on. His withered guide led him along several obscure passages, and finally undid a door, through which, as it was opened, there came the sight and sound of rustling leaves, with the broken sunshine slimmering among them. Giovanni stepped forth, and, forcing himself through the entanglement of a shrub that wreathed its tendrils over the hidden entrance, stood beneath his own window in the open area of Dr. Rappaccini's garden.

How often is it the case that, when impossibilities have come to pass and dreams have condensed their misty substance into tangible realities, we find ourselves calm, and even coldly self-possessed, amid circumstances which it would have been a delirium of joy or agony to anticipate! Fate delights to thwart us thus. Passion will choose his own time to rush upon the scene, and lingers sluggishly behind when an appropriate adjustment of events would seem to summon his appearance. So was it now with Giovanni. Day after day his pulses had throbbed with feverish blood at the improbable idea of an interview with Beatrice, and of standing with her, face to face, in this very garden, basking in the Oriental sunshine of her beauty, and snatching from her full gaze the mystery which he deemed the riddle of his own existence. But now there was a singular and untimely equanimity within his breast. He threw a glance around the garden to discover if Beatrice or her father were present, and, perceiving that he was alone, began a critical observation of the plants.

The aspect of one and all of them dissatisfied him; their gorgeousness seemed fierce, passionate, and even unnatural. There was hardly an individual shrub which a wanderer, straying by himself through a forest, would not have been startled to find growing wild, as if an unearthly face had glared at him out of the thicket. Several also would have shocked a delicate instinct by an appearance of artificialness indicating that there had been such commixture, and, as it were, adultery, of various vegetable species, that the

production was no longer of God's making, but the monstrous offspring of man's depraved fancy, glowing with only an evil mockery of beauty. They were probably the result of experiment, which in one or two cases had succeeded in mingling plants individually lovely into a compound possessing the questionable and ominous character that distinguished the whole growth of the garden. In fine, Giovanni recognized but two or three plants in the collection, and those of a kind that he well knew to be poisonous. While busy with these contemplations he heard the rustling of a silken garment, and, turning, beheld Beatrice emerging from beneath the sculptured portal.

Giovanni had not considered with himself what should be his deportment; whether he should apologize for his intrusion into the garden, or assume that he was there with the privacy at least, if not by the desire, of Dr. Rappaccini or his daughter; but Beatrice's manner placed him at his ease, although leaving him still in doubt by what agency he had gained admittance. She came lightly along the path and met him near the broken fountain. There was surprise in her face, but brightened by a simple and kind expression of pleasure.

"You are a connoisseur in flowers, signor," said Beatrice, with a smile, alluding to the bouquet which he had flung her from the window. "It is no marvel, therefore, if the sight of my father's rare collection has tempted you to take a nearer view. If he were here, he could tell you many strange and interesting facts as to the nature and habits of these shrubs; for he has spent a lifetime in such studies, and this garden is his world."

"And yourself, lady," observed Giovanni, "if fame says true,—you likewise are deeply skilled in the virtues indicated by these rich blossoms and these spicy perfumes. Would you deign to be my instructress, I should prove an apter scholar than if taught by Signor Rappaccini himself."

"Are there such idle rumors?" asked Beatrice, with the music of a pleasant laugh. "Do people say that I am skilled in my father's science of plants? What a jest is there! No; though I have grown up among these flowers, I know no more of them than their hues and perfume: and sometimes methinks I would fain rid myself of even that small knowledge. There are many flowers

here, and those not the least brilliant, that shock and offend me when they meet my eye. But pray, signor, do not believe these stories about my science. Believe nothing of me save what you see with your own eyes."

"And must I believe all that I have seen with my own eyes?" asked Giovanni, pointedly, while the recollection of former scenes made him shrink. "No, signora; you demand too little of me. Bid me believe nothing save what comes from your own lips."

It would appear that Beatrice understood him. There came a deep flush to her cheek; but she looked full into Giovanni's eyes, and responded to his gaze of uneasy suspicion with a queenlike haughtiness.

"I do so bid you, signor," she replied. "Forget whatever you may have fancied in regard to me. If true to the outward senses, still it may be false in its essence; but the words of Beatrice Rappaccini's lips are true from the depths of the heart outward. Those you may believe."

A fervor glowed in her whole aspect and beamed upon Giovanni's consciousness like the light of truth itself; but while she spoke there was a fragrance in the atmosphere around her, rich and delightful, though evanescent, yet which the young man, from an indefinable reluctance, scarcely dared to draw into his lungs. It might be the odor of the flowers. Could it be Beatrice's breath which thus embalmed her words with a strange richness, as if by steeping them in her heart? A faintness passed like a shadow over Giovanni and flitted away; he seemed to gaze through the beautiful girl's eyes into her transparent soul, and felt no more doubt or fear.

The tinge of passion that had colored Beatrice's manner vanished; she became gay, and appeared to derive a pure delight from her communion with the youth not unlike what the maiden of a lonely island might have felt conversing with a voyager from the civilized world. Evidently her experience of life had been confined within the limits of that garden. She talked now about matters as simple as the daylight or summer clouds, and now asked questions in reference to the city, or Giovanni's distant home, his friends, his mother, and his sisters—questions indicating such seclusion, and such lack of familiarity with modes and forms, that Giovanni responded as if to an infant. Her spirit gushed

out before him like a fresh rill that was just catching its first glimpse of the sunlight and wondering at the reflections of earth and sky which were flung into its bosom. There came thoughts, too, from a deep source, and fantasies of a gemlike brilliancy, as if diamonds and rubies sparkled upward among the bubbles of the fountain. Ever and anon there gleamed across the young man's mind a sense of wonder that he should be walking side by side with the being who had so wrought upon his imagination, whom he had idealized in such hues of terror, in whom he had positively witnessed such manifestations of dreadful attributes,—that he should be conversing with Beatrice like a brother, and should find her so human and so maidenlike. But such reflections were only momentary; the effect of her character was too real not to make itself familiar at once.

In this free intercourse they had strayed through the garden, and now, after many turns among its avenues, were come to the shattered fountain, beside which grew the magnificent shrub, with its treasury of glowing blossoms. A fragrance was diffused from it which Giovanni recognized as identical with that which he had attributed to Beatrice's breath, but incomparably more powerful. As her eyes fell upon it, Giovanni beheld her press her hand to her bosom as if her heart were throbbing suddenly and painfully.

"For the first time in my life," murmured she, addressing the shrub, "I had forgotten thee."

"I remember, signora," said Giovanni, "that you once promised to reward me with one of these living gems for the bouquet which I had the happy boldness to fling to your feet. Permit me now to pluck it as a memorial of this interview."

He made a step towards the shrub with extended hand; but Beatrice darted forward, uttering a shriek that went through his heart like a dagger. She caught his hand and drew it back with the whole force of her slender figure. Giovanni felt her touch thrilling through his fibres.

"Touch it not!" exclaimed she, in a voice of agony. "Not for thy life! It is fatal!"

Then, hiding her face, she fled from him and vanished beneath the sculptured portal. As Giovanni followed her with his eyes, he beheld the emaciated figure and pale intelligence of Dr. Rappaccini, who had been watching the scene,

he knew not how long, within the shadow of the entrance.

No sooner was Guasconti alone in his chamber than the image of Beatrice came back to his passionate musings, invested with all the witchery that had been gathering around it ever since his first glimpse of her, and now likewise imbued with a tender warmth of girlish womanhood. She was human; her nature was endowed with all gentle and feminine qualities, she was worthiest to be worshipped; she was capable, surely, on her part, of the height and heroism of love. Those tokens which he had hitherto considered as proofs of a frightful peculiarity in her physical and moral system were now either forgotten, or, by the subtle sophistry of passion transmitted into a golden crown of enchantment, rendering Beatrice the more admirable by so much as she was the more unique. Whatever had looked ugly was now beautiful; or, if incapable of such a change, it stole away and hid itself among those shapeless half ideas which throng the dim region beyond the daylight of our perfect consciousness. Thus did he spend the night, nor fell asleep until the dawn had begun to awake the slumbering flowers in Dr. Rappaccini's garden, whither Giovanni's dreams doubtless led him. Up rose the sun in his due season, and, flinging his beams upon the young man's eyelids, awoke him to a sense of pain. When thoroughly aroused, he became sensible of a burning and tingling agony in his hand—in his right hand—the very hand which Beatrice had grasped in her own when he was on the point of plucking one of the gemlike flowers. On the back of that hand there was now a purple print like that of four small fingers, and the likeness of a slender thumb upon his wrist.

Oh, how stubbornly does love,—or even that cunning semblance of love which flourishes in the imagination, but strikes no depth of root into the heart,—how stubbornly does it hold its faith until the moment comes when it is doomed to vanish into thin mist! Giovanni wrapped a handkerchief about his hand and wondered what evil thing had stung him, and soon forgot his pain in a reverie of Beatrice.

After the first interview, a second was in the inevitable course of what we call fate. A third; a fourth; and a meeting with Beatrice in the garden was no longer an incident in Giovanni's daily life, but the whole space in which he might

be said to live; for the anticipation and memory of that ecstatic hour made up the remainder. Nor was it otherwise with the daughter of Rappaccini. She watched for the youth's appearance, and flew to his side with confidence as unreserved as if they had been playmates from early infancy—as if they were such playmates still. If, by any unwonted chance, he failed to come at the appointed moment, she stood beneath the window and sent up the rich sweetness of her tones to float around him in his chamber and echo and reverberate throughout his heart: "Giovanni! Giovanni! Why tarriest thou? Come down!" And down he hastened into that Eden of poisonous flowers.

But, with all this intimate familiarity, there was still a reserve in Beatrice's demeanor, so rigidly and invariably sustained that the idea of infringing it scarcely occurred to his imagination. By all appreciable signs, they loved; they had looked love with eyes that conveyed the holy secret from the depths of one soul into the depths of the other, as if it were too sacred to be whispered by the way; they had even spoken love in those gushes of passion when their spirits darted forth in articulated breath like tongues of long-hidden flame; and yet there had been no seal of lips, no clasp of hands, nor any slightest caress such as love claims and hallows. He had never touched one of the gleaming ringlets of her hair; her garment—so marked was the physical barrier between them—had never been waved against him by a breeze. On the few occasions when Giovanni had seemed tempted to overstep the limit, Beatrice grew so sad, so stern, and withal wore such a look of desolate separation, shuddering at itself, that not a spoken word was requisite to repel him. At such times he was startled at the horrible suspicions that rose, monster-like, out of the caverns of his heart and stared him in the face; his love grew thin and faint as the morning mist; his doubts alone had substance. But, when Beatrice's face brightened again after the momentary shadow, she was transformed at once from the mysterious, questionable being whom he had watched with so much awe and horror; she was now the beautiful and unsophisticated girl whom he felt that his spirit knew with a certainty beyond all other knowledge.

A considerable time had now passed since Giovanni's last meeting with Baglioni. One morning, however, he was disagreeably surprised

by a visit from the professor, whom he had scarcely thought of for whole weeks, and would willingly have forgotten still longer. Given up as he had long been to a pervading excitement, he could tolerate no companions except upon condition of their perfect sympathy with his present state of feeling. Such sympathy was not to be expected from Professor Baglioni.

The visitor chatted carelessly for a few moments about the gossip of the city and the university, and then took up another topic.

"I have been reading an old classic author lately," he said, "and met with a story that strangely interested me. Possibly you may remember it. It is of an Indian prince, who sent a beautiful woman as a present to Alexander the Great. She was as lovely as the dawn and gorgeous as the sunset; but what especially distinguished her was a certain rich perfume in her breath—richer than a garden of Persian roses. Alexander, as was natural to a youthful conqueror, fell in love at first sight with this magnificent stranger; but a certain sage physician, happening to be present, discovered a terrible secret in regard to her"

"And what was that?" asked Giovanni, turning his eyes downward to avoid those of the professor.

"That this lovely woman," continued Baglioni, with emphasis, "had been nourished with poisons from her birth upward, until her whole nature was so imbued with them that she herself had become the deadliest poison in existence. Poison was her element of life. With that rich perfume of her breath she blasted the very air. Her love would have been poison—her embrace death. Is not this a marvellous tale?"

"A childish fable," answered Giovanni, nervously starting from his chair. "I marvel how your worship finds time to read such nonsense among your graver studies."

"By the by," said the professor, looking uneasily about him, "what singular fragrance is this in your apartment? Is it the perfume of your gloves? It is faint, but delicious; and yet, after all, by no means agreeable. Were I to breathe it long, methinks it would make me ill. It is like the breath of a flower; but I see no flowers in the chamber."

"Nor are there any," replied Giovanni, who had turned pale as the professor spoke; "nor, I think, is there any fragrance except in your wor-

ship's imagination. Odors, being a sort of element combined of the sensual and the spiritual, are apt to deceive us in this manner. The recollection of a perfume, the bare idea of it, may easily be mistaken for a present reality."

"Ay; but my sober imagination does not often play such tricks," said Baglioni; "and, were I to fancy any kind of odor, it would be that of some vile apothecary drug, wherewith my fingers are likely enough to be imbued. Our worshipful friend Rappaccini, as I have heard, tinctures his medicaments with odors richer than those of Araby. Doubtless, likewise, the fair and learned Signora Beatrice would minister to her patients with draughts as sweet as a maiden's breath; but woe to him that sips them!"

Giovanni's face evinced many contending emotions. The tone in which the professor alluded to the pure and lovely daughter of Rappaccini was a torture to his soul; and yet the intimation of a view of her character, opposite to his own, gave instantaneous distinctness to a thousand dim suspicions, which now grinned at him like so many demons. But he strove hard to quell them and to respond to Baglioni with a true lover's perfect faith.

"Signor professor," said he, "you were my father's friend; perchance, too, it is your purpose to act a friendly part towards his son. I would fain feel nothing towards you save respect and deference; but I pray you to observe, signor, that there is one subject on which we must not speak. You know not the Signora Beatrice. You cannot, therefore, estimate the wrong—the blasphemy, I may even say—that is offered to her character by a light or injurious word."

"Giovanni! my poor Giovanni!" answered the professor, with a calm expression of pity, "I know this wretched girl far better than yourself. You shall hear the truth in respect to the poisoner Rappaccini and his poisonous daughter; yes, poisonous as she is beautiful. Listen; for, even should you do violence to my gray hairs, it shall not silence me. That old fable of the Indian woman has become a truth by the deep and deadly science of Rappaccini and in the person of the lovely Beatrice."

Giovanni groaned and hid his face.

"Her father," continued Baglioni, "was not restrained by natural affection from offering up his child in this horrible manner as the victim of his insane zeal for science; for, let us do him

justice, he is as true a man of science as ever distilled his own heart in an alembic. What, then, will be your fate? Beyond a doubt you are selected as the material of some new experiment. Perhaps the result is to be death; perhaps a fate more awful still. Rappaccini, with what he calls the interest of science before his eyes, will hesitate at nothing."

"It is a dream," muttered Giovanni to himself; "surely it is a dream."

"But," resumed the professor, "be of good cheer, son of my friend. It is not yet too late for the rescue. Possibly we may even succeed in bringing back this miserable child within the limits of ordinary nature, from which her father's madness has estranged her. Behold this little silver vase! It was wrought by the hands of the renowned Benvenuto Cellini, and is well worthy to be a love gift to the fairest dame in Italy. But its contents are invaluable. One little sip of this antidote would have rendered the most virulent poisons of the Borgias innocuous. Doubt not that it will be as efficacious against those of Rappaccini. Bestow the vase, and the precious liquid within it, on your Beatrice, and hopefully await the result."

Baglioni laid a small, exquisitely wrought silver vial on the table and withdrew, leaving what he had said to produce its effect upon the young man's mind.

"We will thwart Rappaccini yet," thought he, chuckling to himself, as he descended the stairs; "but, let us confess the truth of him, he is a wonderful man—a wonderful man indeed; a vile empiric, however, in his practice, and therefore not to be tolerated by those who respect the good old rules of the medical profession."

Throughout Giovanni's whole acquaintance with Beatrice, he had occasionally, as we have said, been haunted by dark surmises as to her character; yet so thoroughly had she made herself felt by him as a simple, natural, most affectionate, and guileless creature, that the image now held up by Professor Baglioni looked as strange and incredible as if it were not in accordance with his own original conception. True, there were ugly recollections connected with his first glimpses of the beautiful girl; he could not quite forget the bouquet that withered in her grasp, and the insect that perished amid the sunny air, by no ostensible agency save the fragrance of her breath. These incidents, however,

dissolving in the pure light of her character, had no longer the efficacy of facts, but were acknowledged as mistaken fantasies, by whatever testimony of the senses they might appear to be substantiated. There is something truer and more real than what we can see with the eyes and touch with the finger. On such better evidence had Giovanni founded his confidence in Beatrice, though rather by the necessary force of her high attributes than by any deep and generous faith on his part. But now his spirit was incapable of sustaining itself at the height to which the early enthusiasm of passion had exalted it; he fell down, grovelling among earthly doubts, and defiled therewith the pure whiteness of Beatrice's image. Not that he gave her up; he did but distrust. He resolved to institute some decisive test that should satisfy him, once for all, whether there were those dreadful peculiarities in her physical nature which could not be supposed to exist without some corresponding monstrosity of soul. His eyes, gazing down afar, might have deceived him as to the lizard, the insect, and the flowers; but if he could witness, at the distance of a few paces, the sudden blight of one fresh and healthful flower in Beatrice's hand, there would be room for no further question. With this idea he hastened to the florist's and purchased a bouquet that was still gemmed with the morning dew-drops.

It was now the customary hour of his daily interview with Beatrice. Before descending into the garden, Giovanni failed not to look at his figure in the mirror,—a vanity to be expected in a beautiful young man, yet, as displaying itself at that troubled and feverish moment, the token of a certain shallowness of feeling and insincerity of character. He did gaze, however, and said to himself that his features had never before possessed so rich a grace, nor his eyes such vivacity, nor his cheeks so warm a hue of superabundant life.

"At least," thought he, "her poison has not yet insinuated itself into my system. I am no flower to perish in her grasp."

With that thought he turned his eyes on the bouquet, which he had never once laid aside from his hand. A thrill of indefinable horror shot through his frame on perceiving that those dewy flowers were already beginning to droop; they wore the aspect of things that had been fresh and lovely yesterday. Giovanni grew white as

marble, and stood motionless before the mirror, staring at his own reflection there as at the likeness of something frightful. He remembered Baglioni's remark about the fragrance that seemed to pervade the chamber. It must have been the poison in his breath! Then he shuddered—shuddered at himself. Recovering from his stupor, he began to watch with curious eye a spider that was busily at work hanging its web crossing and recrossing the artful system of interwoven lines—as vigorous and active a spider as ever dangled from an old ceiling Giovanni bent towards the insect, and emitted a deep, long breath. The spider suddenly ceased its toil; the web vibrated with a tremor originating in the body of the small artisan. Again Giovanni sent forth a breath, deeper, longer, and imbued with a venomous feeling out of his heart. he knew not whether he were wicked, or only desperate. The spider made a convulsive gripe with his limbs and hung dead across the window.

"Accursed! accursed!" muttered Giovanni, addressing himself. "Hast thou grown so poisonous that this deadly insect perishes by thy breath?"

At that moment a rich, sweet voice came floating up from the garden.

"Giovanni! Giovanni! It is past the hour! Why tarriest thou? Come down!"

"Yes," muttered Giovanni again. "She is the only being whom my breath may not slay! Would that it might!"

He rushed down, and in an instant was standing before the bright and loving eyes of Beatrice. A moment ago his wrath and despair had been so fierce that he could have desired nothing so much as to wither her by a glance; but with her actual presence there came influences which had too real an existence to be at once shaken off: recollections of the delicate and benign power of her feminine nature, which had so often enveloped him in a religious calm; recollections of many a holy and passionate outgush of her heart, when the pure fountain had been unsealed from its depths and made visible in its transparency to his mental eye; recollections which, had Giovanni known how to estimate them, would have assured him that all this ugly mystery was but an earthly illusion, and that, whatever mist of evil might seem to have gathered over her, the real Beatrice was a heavenly angel. Incapable as he was of such high faith, still her presence had not

utterly lost its magic. Giovanni's rage was quelled into an aspect of sullen insensibility. Beatrice, with a quick spiritual sense, immediately felt that there was a gulf of blackness between them which neither he nor she could pass. They walked on together, sad and silent, and came thus to the marble fountain and to its pool of water on the ground, in the midst of which grew the shrub that bore gemlike blossoms. Giovanni was affrighted at the eager enjoyment—the appetite, as it were—with which he found himself inhaling the fragrance of the flowers.

"Beatrice," asked he, abruptly, "whence came this shrub?"

"My father created it," answered she, with simplicity.

"Created it! created it!" repeated Giovanni. "What mean you, Beatrice?"

"He is a man fearfully acquainted with the secrets of Nature," replied Beatrice; "and, at the hour when I first drew breath, this plant sprang from the soil, the offspring of his science, of his intellect, while I was but his earthly child. Approach it not!" continued she, observing with terror that Giovanni was drawing nearer to the shrub. "It has qualities that you little dream of. But I, dearest Giovanni,—I grew up and blossomed with the plant and was nourished with its breath. It was my sister, and I loved it with a human affection; for, alas!—hast thou not suspected it?—there was an awful doom."

Here Giovanni frowned so darkly upon her that Beatrice paused and trembled. But her faith in his tenderness reassured her, and made her blush that she had doubted for an instant.

"There was an awful doom," she continued, "the effect of my father's fatal love of science, which estranged me from all society of my kind. Until Heaven sent thee, dearest Giovanni, oh, how lonely was thy poor Beatrice!"

"Was it a hard doom?" asked Giovanni, fixing his eyes upon her.

"Only of late have I known how hard it was," answered she, tenderly. "Oh, yes; but my heart was torpid, and therefore quiet."

Giovanni's rage broke forth from his sullen gloom like a lightning flash out of a dark cloud.

"Accursed one!" cried he, with venomous scorn and anger. "And, finding thy solitude wearisome, thou hast severed me likewise from all the warmth of life and enticed me into thy region of unspeakable horror!"

"Giovanni!" exclaimed Beatrice, turning her large bright eyes upon his face. The force of his words had not found its way into her mind; she was merely thunderstruck.

"Yes, poisonous thing!" repeated Giovanni, beside himself with passion. "Thou hast done it! Thou hast blasted me! Thou hast filled my veins with poison! Thou hast made me as hateful, as ugly, as loathsome and deadly a creature as thyself—a world's wonder of hideous monstrosity! Now, if our breath be happily as fatal to ourselves as to all others, let us join our lips in one kiss of unutterable hatred, and so die!"

"What has befallen me?" murmured Beatrice, with a low moan out of her heart. "Holy Virgin, pity me, a poor heartbroken child!"

"Thou,—dost thou pray?" cried Giovanni, still with the same fiendish scorn. "Thy very prayers, as they come from thy lips, taint the atmosphere with death. Yes, yes; let us pray! Let us to church and dip our fingers in the holy water at the portal! They that come after us will perish as by a pestilence! Let us sign crosses in the air! It will be scattering curses abroad in the likeness of holy symbols!"

"Giovanni," said Beatrice, calmly, for her grief was beyond passion, "why dost thou join thyself with me thus in those terrible words? I, it is true, am the horrible thing thou namest me. But thou,—what hast thou to do, save with one other shudder at my hideous misery to go forth out of the garden and mingle with thy race, and forget that there ever crawled on earth such a monster as poor Beatrice?"

"Dost thou pretend ignorance?" asked Giovanni, scowling upon her. "Behold! this power have I gained from the pure daughter of Rappaccini."

There was a swarm of summer insects flitting through the air in search of the food promised by the flower odors of the fatal garden. They circled round Giovanni's head, and were evidently attracted towards him by the same influence which had drawn them for an instant within the sphere of several of the shrubs. He sent forth a breath among them, and smiled bitterly at Beatrice as at least a score of the insects fell dead upon the ground.

"I see it! I see it!" shrieked Beatrice. "It is my father's fatal science! No, no, Giovanni; it was not I! Never! never! I dreamed only to love thee and be with thee a little time, and so to let thee

pass away, leaving but thine image in mine heart; for, Giovanni, believe it, though my body be nourished with poison, my spirit is God's creature, and craves love as its daily food. But my father,—he has united us in this fearful sympathy. Yes; spurn me, tread upon me, kill me! Oh, what is death after such words as thine? But it was not I. Not for a world of bliss would I have done it."

Giovanni's passion had exhausted itself in its outburst from his lips. There now came across him a sense, mournful, and not without tenderness, of the intimate and peculiar relationship between Beatrice and himself. They stood, as it were, in an utter solitude, which would be made none the less solitary by the densest throng of human life. Ought not, then, the desert of humanity around them to press this insulated pair closer together? If they should be cruel to one another, who was there to be kind to them? Besides, thought Giovanni, might there not still be a hope of his returning within the limits of ordinary nature, and leading Beatrice, the redeemed Beatrice, by the hand? O, weak, and selfish, and unworthy spirit, that could dream of an earthly union and earthly happiness as possible, after such deep love had been so bitterly wronged as was Beatrice's love by Giovanni's blighting words! No, no; there could be no such hope. She must pass heavily, with that broken heart, across the borders of Time—she must bathe her hurts in some fount of paradise, and forget her grief in the light of immortality, and *there* be well.

But Giovanni did not know it.

"Dear Beatrice," said he, approaching her, while she shrank away as always at his approach, but now with a different impulse, "dearest Beatrice, our fate is not yet so desperate. Behold! there is a medicine, potent, as a wise physician has assured me, and almost divine in its efficacy. It is composed of ingredients the most opposite to those by which thy awful father has brought this calamity upon thee and me. It is distilled of blessed herbs. Shall we not quaff it together, and thus be purified from evil?"

"Give it me!" said Beatrice, extending her hand to receive the little silver vial which Giovanni took from his bosom. She added, with a peculiar emphasis, "I will drink; but do thou await the result."

She put Baglioni's antidote to her lips; and, at the same moment, the figure of Rappaccini

emerged from the portal and came slowly towards the marble fountain. As he drew near, the pale man of science seemed to gaze with a triumphant expression at the beautiful youth and maiden, as might an artist who should spend his life in achieving a picture or a group of statuary and finally be satisfied with his success. He paused; his bent form grew erect with conscious power; he spread out his hands over them in the attitude of a father imploring a blessing upon his children; but those were the same hands that had thrown poison into the stream of their lives. Giovanni trembled. Beatrice shuddered nervously, and pressed her hand upon her heart.

"My daughter," said Rappaccini, "thou art no longer lonely in the world. Pluck one of those precious gems from thy sister shrub and bid thy bridegroom wear it in his bosom. It will not harm him now. My science and the sympathy between thee and him have so wrought within his system that he now stands apart from common men, as thou dost, daughter of my pride and triumph, from ordinary women. Pass on, then, through the world, most dear to one another and dreadful to all besides!"

"My father," said Beatrice, feebly,—and still as she spoke she kept her hand upon her heart,—*"wherefore didst thou inflict this miserable doom upon thy child?"*

"Miserable!" exclaimed Rappaccini. "What mean you, foolish girl? Dost thou deem it misery to be endowed with marvellous gifts against which no power nor strength could avail an enemy—misery, to be able to quell the mightiest with a breath—misery, to be as terrible as thou art beautiful? Wouldst thou, then, have preferred the condition of a weak woman, exposed to all evil and capable of none?"

"I would fain have been loved, not feared," murmured Beatrice, sinking down upon the ground. "But now it matters not. I am going, father, where the evil which thou hast striven to mingle with my being will pass away like a dream—like the fragrance of these poisonous flowers, which will no longer taint my breath among the flowers of Eden. Farewell, Giovanni! Thy words of hatred are like lead within my heart; but they, too, will fall away as I ascend. Oh, was there not, from the first, more poison in thy nature than in mine?"

To Beatrice,—so radically had her earthly part been wrought upon by Rappaccini's skill,—as

poison had been life, so the powerful antidote was death; and thus the poor victim of man's ingenuity and of thwarted nature, and of the fatality that attends all such efforts of perverted wisdom, perished there, at the feet of her father and Giovanni. Just at that moment Professor Pietro Baglioni looked forth from the window, and called loudly, in a tone of triumph mixed with horror, to the thunderstricken man of science.

"Rappaccini! Rappaccini! and is *this* the upshot of your experiment!"

ETHAN BRAND

(1850)

The theme of this story is suggested in two hints for stories which Hawthorne in 1844 recorded in *The American Notebooks*: "The search of an investigator for the Unpardonable Sin;—he at last finds it in his own heart and practice." "The Unpardonable Sin might consist in a want of love and reverence for the Human Soul; in consequence of which, the investigator pried into its dark depths, not with a hope or purpose of making it better, but from a cold philosophical curiosity,—content that it should be wicked in whatever kind or degree, and only desiring to study it out. Would not this, in other words, be the separation of the intellect from the heart?" "Ethan Brand" was published in the *Boston Museum* for January 5, 1850; in the *Dollar Magazine* for May of the same year; and in *The Snow-Image and Other Tales* in 1851. Ethan Brand is in no sense a satiric characterization of Herman Melville, as Lewis Mumford suggested in his biography of that writer. The story was written and published before Hawthorne met Melville. For Melville's comments on it, see his second letter to Hawthorne given elsewhere in this volume.

Bartram the lime-burner, a rough, heavy-looking man, begrimed with charcoal, sat watching his kiln at nightfall, while his little son played at building houses with the scattered fragments of marble, when, on the hill-side below them, they heard a roar of laughter, not mirthful, but slow, and even solemn, like a wind shaking the boughs of the forest.

"Father, what is that?" asked the little boy, leaving his play, and pressing betwixt his father's knees.

"Oh, some drunken man, I suppose," answered the lime-burner; "some merry fellow from the bar-room in the village, who dared not laugh

loud enough within doors lest he should blow the roof of the house off. So here he is, shaking his jolly sides at the foot of Graylock."

"But, father," said the child, more sensitive than the obtuse, middle-aged clown, "he does not laugh like a man that is glad. So the noise frightens me!"

"Don't be a fool, child!" cried his father, gruffly. "You will never make a man, I do believe; there is too much of your mother in you. I have known the rustling of a leaf startle you. Hark! Here comes the merry fellow now. You shall see that there is no harm in him."

Bartram and his little son, while they were talking thus, sat watching the same lime-kiln that had been the scene of Ethan Brand's solitary and meditative life, before he began his search for the Unpardonable Sin. Many years, as we have seen, had now elapsed, since that portentous night when the IDEA was first developed. The kiln, however, on the mountain-side, stood unimpaired, and was in nothing changed since he had thrown his dark thoughts into the intense glow of its furnace, and melted them, as it were, into the one thought that took possession of his life. It was a rude, round, tower-like structure about twenty feet high, heavily built of rough stones, and with a hillock of earth heaped about the larger part of its circumference; so that the blocks and fragments of marble might be drawn by cart-loads, and thrown in at the top. There was an opening at the bottom of the tower, like an oven-mouth, but large enough to admit a man in a stooping posture, and provided with a massive iron door. With the smoke and jets of flame issuing from the chinks and crevices of this door, which seemed to give admittance into the hill-side, it resembled nothing so much as the private entrance to the infernal regions, which the shepherds of the Delectable Mountains were accustomed to show to pilgrims.

There are many such lime-kilns in that tract of country, for the purpose of burning the white marble which composes a large part of the substance of the hills. Some of them, built years ago, and long deserted, with weeds growing in the vacant round of the interior, which is open to the sky, and grass and wild-flowers rooting themselves into the chinks of the stones, look already like relics of antiquity, and may yet be overspread with the lichens of centuries to come. Others, where the lime-burner still feeds his

daily and night-long fire, affords points of interest to the wanderer among the hills, who seats himself on a log of wood or a fragment of marble, to hold a chat with the solitary man. It is a lonesome, and, when the character is inclined to thought, may be an intensely thoughtful occupation, as it proved in the case of Ethan Brand, who had mused to such strange purpose, in days gone by, while the fire in this very kiln was burning.

The man who now watched the fire was of a different order, and troubled himself with no thoughts save the very few that were requisite to his business. At frequent intervals, he flung back the clashing weight of the iron door, and, turning his face from the insufferable glare, thrust in huge logs of oak, or stirred the immense brands with a long pole. Within the furnace were seen the curling and riotous flames, and the burning marble, almost molten with the intensity of heat; while without, the reflection of the fire quivered on the dark intricacy of the surrounding forest, and showed in the foreground a bright and ruddy little picture of the hut, the spring beside its door, the athletic and coal-begrimed figure of the lime-burner, and the half-frightened child, shrinking into the protection of his father's shadow. And when, again, the iron door was closed, then reappeared the tender light of the half-full moon, which vainly strove to trace out the indistinct shapes of the neighboring mountains; and, in the upper sky, there was a fitting congregation of clouds, still faintly tinged with the rosy sunset, though thus far down into the valley the sunshine had vanished long and long ago.

The little boy now crept still closer to his father, as footsteps were heard ascending the hill-side, and a human form thrust aside the bushes that clustered beneath the trees.

"Halloo! who is it?" cried the lime-burner, vexed at his son's timidity, yet half infected by it. "Come forward, and show yourself, like a man, or I'll fling this chunk of marble at your head!"

"You offer me a rough welcome," said a gloomy voice, as the unknown man drew nigh. "Yet I neither claim nor desire a kinder one, even at my own fireside."

To obtain a distincter view, Bartram threw open the iron door of the kiln, whence immediately issued a gush of fierce light, that smote

full upon the stranger's face and figure. To a careless eye there appeared nothing very remarkable in his aspect, which was that of a man in a coarse, brown, country-made suit of clothes, tall and thin, with the staff and heavy shoes of a wayfarer. As he advanced, he fixed his eyes—which were very bright—intently upon the brightness of the furnace, as if beheld, or expected to behold, some object worthy of note within it.

"Good evening, stranger," said the lime-burner; "whence come you, so late in the day?"

"I come from my search," answered the wayfarer; "for, at last, it is finished."

"Drunk!—or crazy!" muttered Bartram to himself. "I shall have trouble with the fellow. The sooner I drive him away, the better."

The little boy, all in a tremble, whispered to his father, and begged him to shut the door of the kiln, so that there might not be so much light; for that there was something in the man's face which he was afraid to look at, yet could not look away from. And, indeed, even the lime-burner's dull and torpid sense began to be impressed by an indescribable something in that thin, rugged, thoughtful visage, with the grizzled hair hanging wildly about it, and those deeply sunken eyes, which gleamed like fires within the entrance of a mysterious cavern. But, as he closed the door, the stranger turned towards him, and spoke in a quiet, familiar way, that made Bartram feel as if he were a sane and sensible man, after all.

"Your task draws to an end, I see," said he. "This marble has already been burning three days. A few hours more will convert the stone to lime."

"Why, who are you?" exclaimed the lime-burner. "You seem as well acquainted with my business as I am myself."

"And well I may be," said the stranger; "for I followed the same craft many a long year, and here, too, on this very spot. But you are a new-comer in these parts. Did you never hear of Ethan Brand?"

"The man that went in search of the Unpardonable Sin?" asked Bartram, with a laugh.

"The same," answered the stranger. "He has found what he sought, and therefore he comes back again."

"What! then you are Ethan Brand himself?" cried the lime-burner, in amazement. "I am a

new-comer here, as you say, and they call it eighteen years since you left the foot of Graylock. But, I can tell you, the good folks still talk about Ethan Brand, in the village yonder, and what a strange errand took him away from his lime-kiln. Well, and so you have found the Unpardonable Sin?"

"Even so!" said the stranger, calmly.

"If the question is a fair one," proceeded Bartram, "where might it be?"

Ethan Brand laid his finger on his own heart.

"Here!" replied he.

And then, without mirth in his countenance, but as if moved by an involuntary recognition of the infinite absurdity of seeking throughout the world for what was the closest of all things to himself, and looking into every heart, save his own, for what was hidden in no other breast, he broke into a laugh of scorn. It was the same slow, heavy laugh, that had almost appalled the lime-burner when it heralded the wayfarer's approach.

The solitary mountain-side was made dismal by it. Laughter, when out of place, mistimed, or bursting forth from a disordered state of feeling, may be the most terrible modulation of the human voice. The laughter of one asleep, even if it be a little child,—the madman's laugh,—the wild, screaming laugh of a born idiot,—are sounds that we sometimes tremble to hear, and would always willingly forget. Poets have imagined no utterance of fiends or hobgoblins so fearfully appropriate as a laugh. And even the obtuse lime-burner felt his nerves shaken, as this strange man looked inward at his own heart, and burst into laughter that rolled away into the night, and was indistinctly reverberated among the hills.

"Joe," said he to his little son, "scamper down to the tavern in the village, and tell the jolly fellows there that Ethan Brand has come back and that he has found the Unpardonable Sin!"

The boy darted away on his errand, to which Ethan Brand made no objection, nor seemed hardly to notice it. He sat on a log of wood, looking steadfastly at the iron door of the kiln. When the child was out of sight, and his swift and light footsteps ceased to be heard treading first on the fallen leaves and then on the rocky mountain-path, the lime-burner began to regret his departure. He felt that the little fellow's presence had been a barrier between his guest and him-

self, and that he must now deal, heart to heart, with a man who, on his own confession, had committed the one only crime for which Heaven could afford no mercy. That crime, in its indistinct blackness, seemed to overshadow him. The lime-burner's own sins rose up within him, and made his memory riotous with a throng of evil shapes that asserted their kindred with the Master Sin, whatever it might be, which it was within the scope of man's corrupted nature to conceive and cherish. They were all of one family; they went to and fro between his breast and Ethan Brand's, and carried dark greetings from one to the other.

Then Bartram remembered the stories which had grown traditionary in reference to this strange man, who had come upon him like a shadow of the night, and was making himself at home in his old place, after so long absence, that the dead people, dead and buried for years, would have had more right to be at home, in any familiar spot, than he. Ethan Brand, it was said, had conversed with Satan himself in the lurid blaze of this very kiln. The legend had been matter of mirth heretofore, but looked grisly now. According to this tale, before Ethan Brand departed on his search, he had been accustomed to evoke a fiend from the hot furnace of the lime-kiln, night after night, in order to confer with him about the Unpardonable Sin; the man and the fiend each laboring to frame the image of some mode of guilt which could neither be atoned for nor forgiven. And, with the first gleam of light upon the mountain-top, the fiend crept in at the iron door, there to abide the intensest element of fire until again summoned forth to share in the dreadful task of extending man's possible guilt beyond the scope of Heaven's else infinite mercy.

While the lime-burner was struggling with the horror of these thoughts, Ethan Brand rose from the log, and flung open the door of the kiln. The action was in such accordance with the idea in Bartram's mind, that he almost expected to see the Evil One issue forth, red-hot, from the raging furnace.

"Hold! hold!" cried he, with a tremulous attempt to laugh; for he was ashamed of his fears, although they overmastered him. "Don't, for mercy's sake, bring out your Devil now!"

"Man!" sternly replied Ethan Brand, "what need have I of the Devil? I have left him behind

me, on my track. It is with such half-way sinners as you that he busies himself. Fear not, because I open the door. I do but act by old custom, and am going to trim your fire, like a lime-burner, as I was once."

He stirred the vast coals, thrust in more wood, and bent forward to gaze into the hollow prison-house of the fire, regardless of the fierce glow that reddened upon his face. The lime-burner sat watching him, and half suspected this strange guest of a purpose, if not to evoke a fiend, at least to plunge bodily into the flames, and thus vanish from the sight of man. Ethan Brand, however, drew quietly back, and closed the door of the kiln.

"I have looked," said he, "into many a human heart that was seven times hotter with sinful passions than yonder furnace is with fire. But I found not there what I sought. No, not the Unpardonable Sin!"

"What is the Unpardonable Sin?" asked the lime-burner; and then he shrank farther from his companion, trembling lest his question should be answered.

"It is a sin that grew within my own breast," replied Ethan Brand, standing erect, with a pride that distinguishes all enthusiasts of his stamp. "A sin that grew nowhere else! The sin of an intellect that triumphed over the sense of brotherhood with man and reverence for God, and sacrificed everything to its own mighty claims! The only sin that deserves a recompense of immortal agony! Freely, were it to do again, would I incur the guilt. Unshrinkingly I accept the retribution!"

"The man's head is turned," muttered the lime-burner to himself. "He may be a sinner like the rest of us,—nothing more likely,—but, I'll be sworn, he is a madman too."

Nevertheless, he felt uncomfortable at his situation, alone with Ethan Brand on the wild mountain-side, and was right glad to hear the rough murmur of tongues, and the footsteps of what seemed a pretty numerous party, stumbling over the stones and rustling through the underbrush. Soon appeared the whole lazy regiment that was wont to infest the village tavern, comprehending three or four individuals who had drunk flip beside the bar-room fire through all the winters, and smoked their pipes beneath the stoop through all the summers, since Ethan Brand's departure. Laughing boisterously, and

mingling all their voices together in unceremonious talk, they now burst into the moonshine and narrow streaks of firelight that illuminated the open space before the lime-kiln. Bartram set the door ajar again, flooding the spot with light, that the whole company might get a fair view of Ethan Brand, and he of them.

There, among other old acquaintances, was a once ubiquitous man, now almost extinct, but whom we were formerly sure to encounter at the hotel of every thriving village throughout the country. It was the stage-agent. The present specimen of the genus was a wilted and smoke-dried man, wrinkled and red-nosed, in a smartly cut, brown, bob-tailed coat, with brass buttons, who, for a length of time unknown, had kept his desk and corner in the bar-room, and was still puffing what seemed to be the same cigar that he had lighted twenty years before. He had great fame as a dry joker, though, perhaps, less on account of any intrinsic humor than from a certain flavor of brandy-toddy and tobacco-smoke, which impregnated all his ideas and expressions, as well as his person. Another well-remembered, though strangely altered, face was that of Lawyer Giles, as people still called him in courtesy; an elderly ragamuffin, in his soiled shirt-sleeves and tow-cloth trousers. This poor fellow had been an attorney, in what he called his better days, a sharp practitioner, and in great vogue among the village litigants; but flip, and sling, and toddy, and cocktails, imbibed at all hours, morning, noon, and night, had caused him to slide from intellectual to various kinds and degrees of bodily labor, till at last, to adopt his own phrase, he slid into a soap-vat. In other words, Giles was now a soap-boiler, in a small way. He had come to be but the fragment of a human being, a part of one foot having been chopped off by an axe, and an entire hand torn away by the devilish grip of a steam-engine. Yet, though the corporeal hand was gone, a spiritual member remained; for, stretching forth the stump, Giles steadfastly averred that he felt an invisible thumb and fingers with as vivid a sensation as before the real ones were amputated. A maimed and miserable wretch he was; but one, nevertheless, whom the world could not trample on, and had no right to scorn, either in this or any previous stage of his misfortunes, since he had still kept up the courage and spirit of a man, asked nothing in charity, and with his one hand—and that the left one—

fought a stern battle against want and hostile circumstances.

Among the throng, too, came another personage, who, with certain points of similarity to Lawyer Giles, had many more of difference. It was the village doctor; a man of some fifty years, whom, at an earlier period of his life, we introduced as paying a professional visit to Ethan Brand during the latter's supposed insanity. He was now a purple-visaged, rude, and brutal, yet half-gentlemanly figure, with something wild, ruined, and desperate in his talk, and in all the details of his gesture and manners. Brandy possessed this man like an evil spirit, and made him as surly and savage as a wild beast, and as miserable as a lost soul; but there was supposed to be in him such wonderful skill, such native gifts of healing, beyond any which medical science could impart, that society caught hold of him, and would not let him sink out of its reach. So, swaying to and fro upon his horse, and grumbling thick accents at the bedside, he visited all the sick-chambers for miles about among the mountain towns, and sometimes raised a dying man, as it were, by miracle, or quite as often, no doubt, sent his patient to a grave that was dug many a year too soon. The doctor had an everlasting pipe in his mouth, and, as somebody said, in allusion to his habit of swearing, it was always alight with hell-fire.

These three worthies pressed forward, and greeted Ethan Brand each after his own fashion, earnestly inviting him to partake of the contents of a certain black bottle, in which, as they averred, he would find something far better worth seeking for than the Unpardonable Sin. No mind, which has wrought itself by intense and solitary meditation into a high state of enthusiasm, can endure the kind of contact with low and vulgar modes of thought and feeling to which Ethan Brand was now subjected. It made him doubt—and, strange to say, it was a painful doubt—whether he had indeed found the Unpardonable Sin, and found it within himself. The whole question on which he had exhausted life, and more than life, looked like a delusion.

"Leave me," he said bitterly, "ye brute beasts, that have made yourselves so, shrivelling up your souls with fiery liquors! I have done with you. Years and years ago, I groped into your hearts and found nothing there for my purpose. Get ye gone!"

"Why, you uncivil scoundrel," cried the fierce doctor, "is that the way you respond to the kindness of your best friends? Then let me tell you the truth. You have no more found the Unpardonable Sin than yonder boy Joe has. You are but a crazy fellow,—I told you so twenty years ago,—neither better nor worse than a crazy fellow, and the fit companion of old Humphrey, here!"

He pointed to an old man, shabbily dressed, with long white hair, thin visage, and unsteady eyes. For some years past this aged person had been wandering about among the hills, inquiring of all travelers whom he met for his daughter. The girl, it seemed, had gone off with a company of circus-performers, and occasionally tidings of her came to the village, and fine stories were told of her glittering appearance as she rode on horseback in the ring, or performed marvellous feats on the tight-rope.

The white-haired father now approached Ethan Brand, and gazed unsteadily into his face.

"They tell me you have been all over the earth," said he, wringing his hands with earnestness. "You must have seen my daughter, for she makes a grand figure in the world, and everybody goes to see her. Did she send any word to her old father, or say when she was coming back?"

Ethan Brand's eye quailed beneath the old man's. That daughter, from whom he so earnestly desired a word of greeting, was the Esther of our tale, the very girl whom, with such cold and remorseless purpose, Ethan Brand had made the subject of a psychological experiment, and wasted, absorbed, and perhaps annihilated her soul, in the process.

"Yes," murmured he, turning away from the hoary wanderer, "it is no delusion. There is an Unpardonable Sin!"

While these things were passing, a merry scene was going forward in the area of cheerful light, beside the spring and before the door of the hut. A number of the youth of the village, young men and girls, had hurried up the hill-side, impelled by curiosity to see Ethan Brand, the hero of so many a legend familiar to their childhood. Finding nothing, however, very remarkable in his aspect,—nothing but a sunburnt wayfarer, in plain garb and dusty shoes, who sat looking into the fire as if he fancied pictures among the coals,—these young people speedily grew tired of observing him. As it happened, there was

other amusement at hand. An old German Jew, traveling with a diorama on his back, was passing down the mountain-road towards the village just as the party turned aside from it, and, in hopes of eking out the profits of the day, the showman had kept them company to the limekiln.

"Come, old Dutchman," cried one of the young men, "let us see your pictures, if you can swear they are worth looking at!"

"Oh yes, Captain," answered the Jew,—whether as a matter of courtesy or craft, he styled everybody Captain,—“I shall show you, indeed, some very superb pictures!”

So, placing his box in a proper position, he invited the young men and girls to look through the glass orifices of the machine, and proceeded to exhibit a series of the most outrageous scratchings and daubings, as specimens of the fine arts, that ever an itinerant showman had the face to impose upon his circle of spectators. The pictures were worn out, moreover, tattered, full of cracks and wrinkles, dingy with tobacco-smoke, and otherwise in a most pitiable condition. Some purported to be cities, public edifices, and ruined castles in Europe; others represented Napoleon's battles and Nelson's sea-fights; and in the midst of these would be seen a gigantic, brown, hairy hand,—which might have been mistaken for the Hand of Destiny, though, in truth, it was only the showman's,—pointing its forefinger to various scenes of the conflict, while its owner gave historical illustrations. When, with much merriment at its abominable deficiency of merit, the exhibition was concluded, the German bade little Joe put his head into the box. Viewed through the magnifying-glasses, the boy's round, rosy visage assumed the strangest imaginable aspect of an immense Titanic child, the mouth grinning broadly, and the eyes and every other feature overflowing with fun at the joke. Suddenly, however, that merry face turned pale, and its expression changed to horror, for this easily impressed and excitable child had become sensible that the eye of Ethan Brand was fixed upon him through the glass.

"You make the little man to be afraid, Captain," said the German Jew, turning up the dark and strong outline of his visage from his stooping posture. "But look again, and, by chance, I shall cause you to see somewhat that is very fine, upon my word!"

Ethan Brand gazed into the box for an instant, and then starting back, looked fixedly at the German. What had he seen? Nothing, apparently, for a curious youth, who had peeped in almost at the same moment, beheld only a vacant space of canvas.

"I remember you now," muttered Ethan Brand to the showman.

"Ah, Captain," whispered the Jew of Nuremberg, with a dark smile, "I find it to be a heavy matter in my show-box,—this Unpardonable Sin! By my faith, Captain, it has wearied my shoulders, this long day, to carry it over the mountain."

"Peace," answered Ethan Brand, sternly, "or get thee into the furnace yonder!"

The Jew's exhibition had scarcely concluded, when a great, elderly dog—who seemed to be his own master, as no person in the company laid claim to him—saw fit to render himself the object of public notice. Hitherto, he had shown himself a very quiet, well-disposed old dog, going round from one to another, and, by way of being sociable, offering his rough head to be patted by any kindly hand that would take so much trouble. But now, all of a sudden, this grave and venerable quadruped, of his own mere motion, and without the slightest suggestion from anybody else, began to run round after his tail, which, to heighten the absurdity of the proceeding, was a great deal shorter than it should have been. Never was seen such headlong eagerness in pursuit of an object that could not possibly be attained, never was heard such a tremendous outbreak of growling, snarling, barking, and snapping,—as if one end of the ridiculous brute's body were at deadly and most unforgivable enmity with the other. Faster and faster, round about went the cur; and faster and still faster fled the unapproachable brevity of his tail; and louder and fiercer grew his yells of rage and animosity; until, utterly exhausted, and as far from the goal as ever, the foolish old dog ceased his performance as suddenly as he had begun it. The next moment he was as mild, quiet, sensible, and respectable in his deportment, as when he first scraped acquaintance with the company.

As may be supposed, the exhibition was greeted with universal laughter, clapping of hands, and shouts of encore, to which the canine performer responded by wagging all that there was to wag of his tail, but appeared totally un-

able to repeat his very successful effort to amuse the spectators.

Meanwhile, Ethan Brand had resumed his seat upon the log, and moved, it might be, by a perception of some remote analogy between his own case and that of this self-pursuing cur, he broke into the awful laugh, which, more than any other token, expressed the condition of his inward being. From that moment, the merriment of the party was at an end, they stood aghast, dreading lest the inauspicious sound should be reverberated around the horizon, and that mountain would thunder it to mountain, and so the horror be prolonged upon their ears. Then, whispering one to another that it was late,—that the moon was almost down,—that the August night was growing chill,—they hurried homewards, leaving the lime-burner and little Joe to deal as they might with their unwelcome guest. Save for these three human beings, the open space on the hill-side was a solitude, set in a vast gloom of forest. Beyond that darksome verge, the firelight glimmered on the stately trunks and almost black foliage of pines, intermixed with the lighter verdure of sapling oaks, maples, and poplars, while here and there lay the gigantic corpses of dead trees, decaying on the leaf-strewn soil. And it seemed to little Joe—a timorous and imaginative child—that the silent forest was holding its breath until some fearful thing should happen.

Ethan Brand thrust more wood into the fire, and closed the door of the kiln; then looking over his shoulder at the lime-burner and his son, he bade, rather than advised, them to retire to rest.

“For myself, I cannot sleep,” said he. “I have matters that it concerns me to meditate upon. I will watch the fire, as I used to do in the old time.”

“And call the Devil out of the furnace to keep you company, I suppose,” muttered Bartram, who had been making intimate acquaintance with the black bottle above mentioned. “But watch, if you like, and call as many devils as you like! For my part, I shall be all the better for a snooze. Come, Joel!”

As the boy followed his father into the hut, he looked back at the wayfarer, and the tears came into his eyes, for his tender spirit had an intuition of the bleak and terrible loneliness in which this man had enveloped himself.

When they had gone, Ethan Brand sat listening to the crackling of the kindled wood, and looking at the little spirits of fire that issued through the chinks of the door. These trifles, however, once so familiar, had but the slightest hold of his attention, while deep within his mind he was reviewing the gradual but marvelous change that had been wrought upon him by the search to which he had devoted himself. He remembered how the night dew had fallen upon him,—how the dark forest had whispered to him,—how the stars had gleamed upon him,—a simple and loving man, watching his fire in the years gone by, and ever musing as it burned. He remembered with what tenderness, with what love and sympathy for mankind, and what pity for human guilt and woe, he had first begun to contemplate those ideas which afterwards became the inspiration of his life; with what reverence he had then looked into the heart of man, viewing it as a temple originally divine, and, however desecrated, still to be held sacred by a brother; with what awful fear he had deprecated the success of his pursuit, and prayed that the Unpardonable Sin might never be revealed to him. Then ensued that vast intellectual development, which, in its progress, disturbed the counterpoise between his mind and heart. The Idea that possessed his life had operated as a means of education; it had gone on cultivating his powers to the highest point of which they were susceptible; it had raised him from the level of an unlettered laborer to stand on a star-lit eminence, whither the philosophers of the earth, laden with the lore of universities, might vainly strive to clamber after him. So much for the intellect! But where was the heart? That, indeed, had withered,—had contracted,—had hardened,—had perished! It had ceased to partake of the universal throb. He had lost his hold of the magnetic chain of humanity. He was no longer a brother-man, opening the chambers or the dungeons of our common nature by the key of holy sympathy, which gave him a right to share in all its secrets; he was now a cold observer, looking on mankind as the subject of his experiment, and, at length, converting man and woman to be his puppets, and pulling the wires that moved them to such degrees of crime as were demanded for his study.

Thus Ethan Brand became a fiend. He began to be so from the moment that his moral nature

had ceased to keep the pace of improvement with his intellect. And now, as his highest effort and inevitable development,—as the bright and gorgeous flower, and rich, delicious fruit of his life's labor,—he had produced the Unpardonable Sin!

"What more have I to seek? what more to achieve?" said Ethan Brand to himself. "My task is done, and well done!"

Starting from the log with a certain alacrity in his gait and ascending the hillock of earth that was raised against the stone circumference of the lime-kiln, he thus reached the top of the structure. It was a space of perhaps ten feet across, from edge to edge, presenting a view of the upper surface of the immense mass of broken marble with which the kiln was heaped. All these innumerable blocks and fragments of marble were red-hot and vividly on fire, sending up great spouts of blue flame, which quivered aloft and danced madly, as within a magic circle, and sank and rose again, with continual and multitudinous activity. As the lonely man bent forward over this terrible body of fire, the blasting heat smote up against his person with a breath that, it might be supposed, would have scorched and shrivelled him up in a moment.

Ethan Brand stood erect, and raised his arms on high. The blue flames played upon his face, and imparted the wild and ghastly light which alone could have suited its expression; it was that of a fiend on the verge of plunging into his gulf of intensest torment.

"O Mother Earth," cried he, "who art no more my Mother, and into whose bosom this frame shall never be resolved! O mankind, whose brotherhood I have cast off, and trampled thy great heart beneath my feet! O stars of heaven, that shone on me of old, as if to light me onward and upward!—farewell all, and forever. Come, deadly element of Fire,—henceforth my familiar frame! Embrace me, as I do thee!"

That night the sound of a fearful peal of laughter rolled heavily through the sleep of the lime-burner and his little son; dim shapes of horror and anguish haunted their dreams, and seemed still present in the rude hovel, when they opened their eyes to the daylight.

"Up, boy, up!" cried the lime-burner, staring about him. "Thank Heaven, the night is gone, at last; and rather than pass such another, I would watch my lime-kiln, wide awake, for a

twelvemonth. This Ethan Brand, with his humbug of an Unpardonable Sin, has done me no such mighty favor, in taking my place!"

He issued from the hut, followed by little Joe, who kept fast hold of his father's hand. The early sunshine was already pouring its gold upon the mountain-tops, and though the valleys were still in shadow, they smiled cheerfully in the promise of the bright day that was hastening onward. The village, completely shut in by hills, which swelled away gently about it, looked as if it had rested peacefully in the hollow of the great hand of Providence. Every dwelling was distinctly visible; the little spires of the two churches pointed upwards, and caught a fore-glimmering of brightness from the sun-gilt skies upon their gilded weathercocks. The tavern was astir, and the figure of the old, smoke-dried stage-agent, cigar in mouth, was seen beneath the stoop. Old Graylock was glorified with a golden cloud upon his head. Scattered likewise over the breasts of the surrounding mountains, there were heaps of hoary mist, in fantastic shapes, some of them far down into the valley, others high up towards the summits, and still others, of the same family of mist or cloud, hovering in the gold radiance of the upper atmosphere. Stepping from one to another of the clouds that rested on the hills, and thence to the loftier brotherhood that sailed in air, it seemed almost as if a mortal man might thus ascend into the heavenly regions. Earth was so mingled with sky that it was a day-dream to look at it.

To supply that charm of the familiar and homely, which Nature so readily adopts into a scene like this, the stage-coach was rattling down the mountain-road, and the driver sounded his horn, while Echo caught up the notes, and intertwined them into a rich and varied and elaborate harmony, of which the original performer could lay claim to little share. The great hills played a concert among themselves, each contributing a strain of airy sweetness.

Little Joe's face brightened at once.

"Dear father," cried he, skipping cheerily to and fro, "that strange man is gone, and the sky and the mountains all seem glad of it!"

"Yes," growled the lime-burner, with an oath, "but he has let the fire go down, and no thanks to him if five hundred bushels of lime are not spoiled. If I catch the fellow hereabouts again, I shall feel like tossing him into the furnace!"

With his long pole in his hand, he ascended to the top of the kiln. After a moment's pause, he called to his son.

"Come up here, Joel" said he.

So little Joe ran up the hillock, and stood by his father's side. The marble was all burnt into perfect, snow-white lime. But on its surface, in the midst of the circle,—snow-white too, and thoroughly converted into lime,—lay a human skeleton, in the attitude of a person who, after long toil, lies down to long repose. Within the

ribs—strange to say—was the shape of a human heart.

"Was the fellow's heart made of marble?" cried Bartram, in some perplexity at this phenomenon. "At any rate, it is burnt into what looks like special good lime, and, taking all the bones together, my kiln is half a bushel the richer for him."

So saying, the rude lime-burner lifted his pole, and, letting it fall upon the skeleton, the relics of Ethan Brand were crumbled into fragments.

HERMAN MELVILLE

1819 - 1891

... if, at my death, my executors, or more properly my creditors, find any precious MSS. in my desk, then here I prospectively ascribe all the honor and the glory to whaling; for a whale-ship was my Yale College and my Harvard.

—HERMAN MELVILLE, *Moby-Dick*, Chapter XXIV.

Melville, whom his English biographer, John Freeman, has called "the most powerful of all the great American writers," was born, ten years after Poe, in New York City on August 1, 1819. In the same year were born Queen Victoria, George Eliot, John Ruskin, Lowell, and Walt Whitman. One may read much in Melville, Lowell, and Whitman without learning that they were aware of one another's existence. Melville belonged to a well-to-do family; but his father failed in business in 1830 and died two years later, leaving wife and children, then living in Albany, in straitened circumstances. Melville, instead of going to college, clerked in a store and worked in a bank. In 1837 he shipped as cabin boy on a ship bound for Liverpool. In *Redburn* (1849) he gives some account of his first voyage. The period from his return to New York until January, 1841, is obscure. A part of the time was spent in teaching, which he seems to have disliked. If *Moby-Dick* is to be taken literally, going to sea was Melville's "substitute for pistol and ball." Again he says: "I am tormented with an everlasting itch for things remote. I love to sail forbidden seas, and land on barbarous coasts." Whatever the reason, Melville shipped on the whaler *Acushnet*, bound for the Pacific Ocean. He was away nearly four years, returning in October, 1844.

These four years gave Melville the material for his best-known books. *Typee* (1846) describes

his desertion from the *Acushnet* and his stay of four months among the happy savages in the Marquesas Islands. *Omoo* (1847) deals with a sojourn in Tahiti. *White-Jacket* (1850) describes his experiences on the frigate *United States*, on which he returned from Honolulu. *Mardi* (1849) and *Moby-Dick* (1851) also deal with life in the Pacific, but they are obviously less autobiographical. Charles R. Anderson's *With Melville in the South Seas*, which brings to light new evidence, indicates that Melville's books are more fiction and less autobiography than had been supposed. Other American writers knew the sea, but Melville was the literary discoverer of the South Seas. So far as raw materials were concerned, he came home supplied with matter as new and striking as that of Cooper's frontier romances had seemed a few years before.

For a time his books had a considerable vogue. He was attacked, however, for indiscreet accounts of missionaries and for suggestions that the primitive peoples suffered far more than they gained from contact with the whites. Meanwhile in 1847 Melville had married a daughter of Chief Justice Shaw, of Massachusetts, and was finding it difficult to support his family by his pen. He tried writing for the magazines; he tried to write novels that would be widely read; he tried lecturing; he tried to secure a consular appointment. Poor health added to his difficulties. Finally, in 1866 he became an inspector in the New York Customs House. This position he held until 1886. Meanwhile he had largely given up writing except for verse. During his last years, however, he wrote one of his best stories, *Billy Budd*, which was not published until 1924.

Melville is not altogether the discovery of the twentieth century that he is supposed to be. He has, however, had his greatest vogue in our time. The twentieth century found his pessimism not uncongenial and relished his attacks upon aspects of American life and thought which he disliked. Modern critics and biographers, however, have read into Melville perhaps more than is actually there. They have read his books, particularly *Pierre* (1852), in the light of the Freudian psychology, of which Melville of course knew nothing. And yet, even if some contemporary critics have overrated Melville, it would seem clear now that *Moby-Dick*, his masterpiece, belongs among the great American novels, along with *The Scarlet Letter* and *Huckleberry Finn*.

The only important American writer with whom Melville's relations were ever close was Nathaniel Hawthorne. In October, 1850, Melville settled with his family at Arrowhead farm near Pittsfield, Mass. Hawthorne was then living at Lenox, which was not far off. In a letter to her mother Mrs. Hawthorne gave her impressions of Melville:

"I am not quite sure that *I do not think him* a very great man. . . . A man with a true, warm heart, and a soul and an intellect,—with life to his finger-tips; earnest, sincere and reverent; very tender and *modest*. . . . He has very keen perceptive power; but what astonishes me is, that his eyes are not large and deep. He seems to see everything very accurately; and how he can do so with his small eyes, I cannot tell. They are not keen eyes, either, but quite undistinguished in any way. His nose is straight and rather handsome, his mouth expressive of sensibility and emotion. He is tall, and erect, with an air free, brave and manly. When conversing, he is full of gesture and force, and loses himself in his subject. There is no grace nor polish. Once in a while, his animation gives place to a singularly quiet expression, out of these eyes to which I have objected; an indrawn, dim look, but which

at the same time makes you feel that he is at that moment taking deepest note of what is before him. It is a strange, lazy glance, but with a power in it quite unique. It does not seem to penetrate through you, but to take you into itself."

Hawthorne's letters to Melville, unfortunately, seem to have been lost or destroyed. Melville's letters to Hawthorne, two of which are given here, indicate that he expected more from his new friend than he was likely to get from any one. At the time Melville was going through the ordeal of writing *Moby-Dick*, tortured by philosophic and religious questions, and worried by his failure to make money by his pen. On August 29, 1850, Hawthorne wrote to E. A. Duyckinck: "'Mardi' is a rich book, with depths here and there that compel a man to swim for his life. It is so good that one scarcely pardons the writer for not having brooded long over it so as to make it a great deal better." Concerning *Moby-Dick*, which Melville had dedicated to him, he wrote to Duyckinck, December 1, 1851: "What a book Melville has written! It gives me an idea of much greater power than his preceding ones." Hawthorne saw Melville again in 1856 in Liverpool, as he tells us in his journal:

"... Melville has not been well, of late; he has been affected with neuralgic complaints, and no doubt has suffered from too constant literary occupation, pursued without much success latterly; and his writings, for a long while past, have indicated a morbid state of mind. So he left his place in Pittsfield, and has come to the Old World. He informed me that he had 'pretty much made up his mind to be annihilated'; but still he does not seem to rest in that anticipation, and I think will never rest until he gets hold of some definite belief. It is strange how he persists—and has persisted ever since I knew him, and probably long before—in wandering to and fro over these deserts, as dismal and monotonous as the sand-hills amidst which we were sitting. He can neither believe, nor be comfortable in his unbelief; and he is too honest and courageous not to try to do one or the other. If he were a religious man, he would be one of the most truly religious and reverential; he has a very high and noble nature, and better worth immortality than most of us."

The standard edition of Melville's works was published by Constable and Company in 1922-1924. The first volume of a new edition under the general editorship of Howard Vincent appeared in 1947. Several of the novels are available in inexpensive editions. Raymond Weaver's *Herman Melville: Mariner and Mystic* (1921) and Lewis Mumford's *Herman Melville* (1929) are the best biographies, but neither is wholly satisfactory. John Freeman's biography (1926) in the English Men of Letters Series contains some excellent criticism. Two important studies are Charles R. Anderson's *Melville in the South Seas* (1939)—the best book yet written on Melville—and F. O. Matthiessen's *American Renaissance* (1941). Willard Thorp's *Herman Melville: Representative Selections* (1938) has a useful bibliography, a good introductory essay, and some Melville letters not to be found elsewhere. Two important studies of Melville's thought are: William Braswell, *Melville's Religious Thought* (1943), and William Ellery Sedgwick, *Herman Melville: The Tragedy of Mind* (1944). Charles Olson's *Call Me Ishmael* (1947) is a study of *Moby-Dick*. For further references, see Lewis Leary (ed.), *Articles on American Literature* . . . (1947).

LETTERS*

TO NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

PITTSFIELD [MASS.], June 29, 1851.

MY DEAR HAWTHORNE,—The clear air and open window invite me to write to you. For some time past I have been so busy with a thousand things that I have almost forgotten when I wrote you last, and whether I received an answer. This most persuasive season has now for weeks recalled me from certain crotchety and over-doleful chimeras, the like of which men like you and me, and some others, forming a chain of God's posts round the world, must be content to encounter now and then, and fight them the best way we can. But come they will,—for in the boundless, trackless, but still glorious wild wilderness through which these outposts run, the Indians do sorely abound, as well as the insignificant but still stinging mosquitoes. Since you have been here, I have been building some shanties of houses (connected with the old one) and likewise some shanties of chapters and essays. I have been ploughing and sowing and raising and printing and praying, and now begin to come out upon a less bristling time, and to enjoy the calm prospect of things from a fair piazza at the north of the old farmhouse here.

Not entirely yet, though, am I without something to be urgent with. The "Whale" is only half through the press; for, wearied with the long delays of the printers, and disgusted with the heat and dust of the Babylonish brick-kiln of New York, I came back to the country to feel the grass, and end the book reclining on it, if I may. I am sure you will pardon this speaking all about myself; for if I say so much on that head, be sure all the rest of the world are thinking about themselves ten times as much. Let us speak, though we show all our faults and weaknesses,—for it is a sign of strength to be weak, to know it, and out with it; not in set way and ostentatiously, though, but incidentally and with premeditation. But I am falling into my old foible,—preaching. I am busy, but shall not be very long. Come and spend a day here, if you can and want to; if not, stay in Lenox, and

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God give you long life. When I am quite free of my present engagements, I am going to treat myself to a ride and a visit to you. Have ready a bottle of brandy, because I always feel like drinking that heroic drink when we talk ontological heroics together. This is rather a crazy letter in some respects, I apprehend. If so, ascribe it to the intoxicating effects of the latter end of June operating upon a very susceptible and peradventure feeble temperament. Shall I send you a fin of the "Whale" by way of a specimen mouthful? The tail is not yet cooked, though the hell-fire in which the whole book is broiled might not unreasonably have cooked it ere this. This is the book's motto (the secret one), *Ego non baptizo te in nomine*¹—but make out the rest yourself.

H M.

TO NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

[1851]

MY DEAR HAWTHORNE,—I should have been rumbling down to you in my pine-board chariot a long time ago, were it not that for some weeks past I have been more busy than you can well imagine,—out of doors,—building and patching and tinkering away in all directions. Besides, I had my crops to get in,—corn and potatoes (I hope to show you some famous ones by and by),—and many other things to attend to, all accumulating upon this one particular season. I work myself; and at night my bodily sensations are akin to those I have so often felt before, when a hired man, doing my day's work from sun to sun. But I mean to continue visiting you until you tell me that my visits are both supererogatory and superfluous. With no son of man do I stand upon any etiquette or ceremony, except the Christian ones of charity and honesty. I am told, my fellow-man, that there is an aristocracy of the brain. Some men have boldly advocated and asserted it. Schiller seems to have done so, though I don't know much about him. At any rate, it is true that there have been those who, while earnest in behalf of political equality, still accept the intellectual estates. And I can well perceive, I think, how a man of superior mind can, by its intense cultivation, bring himself, as it were, into a certain spontaneous aristocracy of feeling,—exceedingly nice and fas-

¹ "I do not baptize thee in the name of —."

tidious,—similar to that which, in an English Howard, conveys a torpedo-fish thrill at the slightest contact with a social plebeian. So, when you see or hear of my ruthless democracy on all sides, you may possibly feel a touch of a shrink, or something of that sort. It is but nature to be shy of a mortal who boldly declares that a thief in jail is as honorable a personage as Gen. George Washington. This is ludicrous. But Truth is the silliest thing under the sun. Try to get a living by the Truth—and go to the Soup Societies Heavens! Let any clergyman try to preach the Truth from its very stronghold, the pulpit, and they would ride him out of his church on his own pulpit bannister. It can hardly be doubted that all Reformers are bottomed upon the truth, more or less; and to the world at large are not reformers almost universally laughing-stocks? Why so? Truth is ridiculous to men. Thus easily in my room here do I, conceited and garrulous, revere the test of my Lord Shaftesbury.

It seems an inconsistency to assert unconditional democracy in all things, and yet confess a dislike to all mankind—in the mass. But not so.—But it's an endless sermon,—and no more of it. I began by saying that the reason I have not been to Lenox is this,—in the evening I feel completely done up, as the phrase is, and incapable of the long jolting to get to your house and back. In a week or so, I go to New York, to bury myself in a third-story room, and work and slave on my "Whale" while it is driving through the press. *That* is the only way I can finish it now,—I am so pulled hither and thither by circumstances. The calm, the coolness, the silent grass-growing mood in which a man *ought* always to compose,—that, I fear, can seldom be mine. Dollars damn me; and the malicious Devil is forever grinning in upon me, holding the door ajar. My dear Sir, a presentiment is on me,—I shall at last be worn out and perish, like an old nutmeg-grater, grated to pieces by the constant attrition of the wood, that is, the nutmeg. What I feel most moved to write, that is banned,—it will not pay. Yet, altogether, write the *other* way I cannot. So the product is a final hash, and all my books are botches. I'm rather sore, perhaps, in this letter; but see my hand!—four blisters on this palm, made by hoes and hammers within the last few days. It is a rainy morning; so I am indoors, and all work suspended. I feel

cheerfully disposed, and therefore I write a little bluely. Would the Gin were here! If ever, my dear Hawthorne, in the eternal times that are to come, you and I shall sit down in Paradise, in some little shady corner by ourselves, and if we shall by any means be able to smuggle a basket of champagne there (I won't believe in a Temperance Heaven), and if we shall then cross our celestial legs in the celestial grass that is forever tropical, and strike our glasses and our heads together, till both musically ring in concert,—then, O my dear fellow-mortal, how shall we pleasantly discourse of all the things manifold which now so distress us,—when all the earth shall be but a reminiscence, yea, its final dissolution an antiquity. Then shall songs be composed as when wars are over; humorous, comic songs,—“Oh, when I lived in that queer little hole called the world,” or, “Oh, when I toiled and sweated below,” or, “Oh, when I knocked and was knocked in the fight”—yes, let us look forward to such things. Let us swear that, though now we sweat, yet it is because of the dry heat which is indispensable to the nourishment of the vine which is to bear the grapes that are to give us the champagne hereafter.

But I was talking of the “Whale.” As the fishermen say, “he’s in his flurry,” when I left him some three weeks ago. I’m going to take him by the jaw, however, before long, and finish him up in some fashion or other. What’s the use of elaborating what, in its very essence, is so short-lived as a modern book? Though I wrote the Gospels in this century, I should die in the gutter.—I talk all about myself, and this is selfishness and egotism. Granted. But how help it? I am writing to you; I know little about you, but something about myself. So I write about myself,—at least, to you. Don’t trouble yourself, though, about writing; and don’t trouble yourself about visiting; and when you *do* visit, don’t trouble yourself about talking. I will do all the writing and visiting and talking myself.—By the way, in the last “Dollar Magazine” I read “The Unpardonable Sin.”² He was a sad fellow, that

² Melville’s comments on “Ethan Brand” are difficult to reconcile with Lewis Mumford’s contention that Ethan was drawn from Melville and that the publication of the story occasioned a coolness between Melville and Hawthorne. The story actually was published before the two writers ever met.

Ethan Brand. I have no doubt you are by this time responsible for many a shake and tremor of the tribe of "general readers." It is a frightful poetical creed that the cultivation of the brain eats out the heart. But it's my *prose* opinion that in most cases, in those men who have fine brains and work them well, the heart extends down to hams. And though you smoke them with the fire of tribulation, yet, like veritable hams, the head only gives the richer and better flavor. I stand for the heart. To the dogs with the head! I had rather be a fool with a heart, than Jupiter Olympus with his head. The reason the mass of men fear God, and *at bottom dislike* Him, is because they rather distrust His Heart, and fancy Him all Brain like a watch. (You perceive I employ a capital initial in the pronoun referring to the Deity; don't you think there is a slight dash of flunkeyism in that usage?) Another thing. I was in New York for four-and-twenty hours the other day, and saw a portrait of N. H. And I have seen and heard many flattering (in a publisher's point of view) allusions to the "Seven Gables." And I have seen "Tales," and "A New Volume" announced, by N. H. So upon the whole, I say to myself, this N. H. is in the ascendant. My dear Sir, they begin to patronize. All Fame is patronage. Let me be infamous: there is no patronage in *that*. What "reputation" H. M. has is horrible. Think of it! To go down to posterity is bad enough, any way; but to go down as a "man who lived among the cannibals"! When I speak of posterity, in reference to myself, I only mean the babies who will probably be born in the moment immediately ensuing upon my giving up the ghost. I shall go down to some of them, in all likelihood. "Typee" will be given to them, perhaps, with their gingerbread. I have come to regard this matter of Fame as the most transparent of all vanities. I read Solomon more and more, and every time see deeper and deeper and unspeakable meanings in him. I did not think of Fame, a year ago, as I do now. My development has been all within a few years past. I am like one of those seeds taken out of the Egyptian Pyramids, which, after being three thousand years a seed and nothing but a seed, being planted in English soil, it developed itself, grew to greenness, and then fell to mould. So I. Until I was twenty-five, I had no development at all. From my twenty-fifth year I date my life. Three weeks have

scarcely passed, at any time between then and now, that I have not unfolded within myself. But I feel that I am now come to the inmost leaf of the bulb, and that shortly the flower must fall to the mould. It seems to me now that Solomon was the truest man who ever spoke, and yet that he a little *managed* the truth with a view to popular conservatism, or else there have been many corruptions and interpolations of the text. —In reading some of Goethe's sayings, so worshipped by his votaries, I came across this, "*Live in the all*." That is to say, your separate identity is but a wretched one,—good; but get out of yourself, spread and expand yourself, and bring to yourself the tinglings of life that are felt in the flowers and the woods, that are felt in the planets Saturn and Venus, and the Fixed Stars. What nonsense! Here is a fellow with a raging toothache. "My dear boy," Goethe says to him, "you are sorely afflicted with that tooth, but you must *live in the all*, and then you will be happy!" As with all great genius, there is an immense deal of flummery in Goethe, and in proportion to my own contact with him, a monstrous deal of it in me.

H. MELVILLE.

P. S. "Amen!" saith Hawthorne.

N. B. This "all" feeling, though, there is some truth in. You must often have felt it, lying on the grass on a warm summer's day. Your legs seem to send out shoots into the earth. Your hair feels like leaves upon your head. This is the *all* feeling. But what plays the mischief with the truth is that men will insist upon the universal application of a temporary feeling or opinion.

P. S. You must not fail to admire my discretion in paying the postage on this letter.

from MOBY-DICK (1851)

It is difficult to represent Melville adequately in an anthology. The best of his short stories, like "Benito Cereno" and "The Encantadas," are very long. His greatest novel, *Moby-Dick*, should be read as a whole and not in selected bits. Perhaps the finest passage in it is the description of the fight with the White Whale at the end of the book, but reading that by itself is like reading the fifth act of a Shakespearean tragedy without having glanced at the preceding four which prepare for the tragic conclusion. The five brief selections given here, it is hoped, will make the student wish to read the whole

of Melville's masterpiece. They illustrate Melville's various styles ranging from colloquial to poetic prose, and they suggest the nature of the narrative and throw light upon what the *White Whale* stood for in the mind of Captain Ahab, the protagonist of the tragedy

CHAPTER XXII. MERRY CHRISTMAS

- - At length the anchor was up, the sails were set, and off we glided. It was a short, cold Christmas; and as the short northern day merged into night, we found ourselves almost broad upon the wintry ocean, whose freezing spray cased us in ice, as in polished armor. The long rows of teeth on the bulwarks glistened in the moonlight; and like the white ivory tusks of some huge elephant, vast curving icicles depended from the bows.

Lank Bildad, as pilot, headed the first watch, and ever and anon, as the old craft deep dived into the green seas, and sent the shivering frost all over her, and the winds howled, and the cordage rang, his steady notes were heard,—

*"Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood,
Stand dressed in living green.
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between."*

Never did those sweet words sound more sweetly to me than then. They were full of hope and fruition. Spite of this frigid winter night in the boisterous Atlantic, spite of my wet feet and wetter jacket, there was yet, it then seemed to me, many a pleasant haven in store; and meads and glades so eternally vernal, that the grass shot up by the spring, untrodden, unwilted, remains at midsummer.

At last we gained such an offing, that the two pilots were needed no longer. The stout sailboat that had accompanied us began ranging alongside.

It was curious and not unpleasing, how Peleg and Bildad were affected at this juncture, especially Captain Bildad. For loath to depart, yet; very loath to leave, for good, a ship bound on so long and perilous a voyage—beyond both stormy Capes; a ship in which some thousands of his hard earned dollars were invested; a ship, in which an old shipmate sailed as captain; a man almost as old as he, once more starting to encounter all the terrors of the pitiless jaw; loath to say good-bye to a thing so every way brimful of every interest to him,—poor old Bildad lin-

gered long, paced the deck with anxious strides; ran down into the cabin to speak another farewell word there, again came on deck, and looked to windward; looked towards the wide and endless waters, only bounded by the far-off unseen Eastern Continents; looked towards the land; looked aloft, looked right and left, looked everywhere and nowhere; and at last, mechanically coiling a rope upon its pin, convulsively grasped stout Peleg by the hand, and holding up a lantern, for a moment stood gazing heroically in his face, as much as to say, "Nevertheless, friend Peleg, I can stand it; yes, I can."

As for Peleg himself, he took it more like a philosopher; but for all his philosophy, there was a tear twinkling in his eye, when the lantern came too near. And he, too, did not a little run from cabin to deck—now a word below, and now a word with Starbuck, the chief mate.

But, at last, he turned to his comrade, with a final sort of look about him,—“Captain Bildad—come, old shipmate, we must go. Back the mainyard there! Boat ahoy! Stand by to come close alongside, now! Careful, careful—come, Bildad, boy—say your last. Luck to ye, Starbuck—luck to ye, Mr. Stubb—luck to ye, Mr. Flask—good-bye, and good luck to ye all—and this day three years I’ll have a hot supper smoking for ye in old Nantucket Hurrah and away!”

“God bless ye, and have ye in His holy keeping, men,” murmured old Bildad, almost incoherently. “I hope ye’ll have fine weather now, so that Captain Ahab may soon be moving among ye—a pleasant sun is all he needs, and ye’ll have plenty of them in the tropic voyage ye go. Be careful in the hunt, ye mates. Don’t stave the boats needlessly, ye harpooners; good white cedar plank is raised full three per cent. within the year. Don’t forget your prayers, either. Mr. Starbuck, mind that cooper don’t waste the spare staves. Oh! the sail-needles are in the green locker! Don’t whale it too much a’ Lord’s days, men; but don’t miss a fair chance either, that’s rejecting Heaven’s good gifts. Have an eye to the molasses tierce, Mr. Stubb; it was a little leaky, I thought. If ye touch at the islands, Mr. Flask, beware of fornication. Good-bye, good-bye! Don’t keep that cheese too long down in the hold, Mr. Starbuck; it’ll spoil. Be careful with the butter—twenty cents the pound it was, and mind ye, if—”

“Come, come, Captain Bildad; stop palaver-

ing,—away!” and with that, Peleg hurried him over the side, and both dropt into the boat.

Ship and boat diverged, the cold, damp night breeze blew between; a screaming gull flew overhead; the two hulls wildly rolled; we gave three heavy-hearted cheers, and blindly plunged like fate into the lone Atlantic.

CHAPTER XXVIII. AHAB

- - - Now, it being Christmas when the ship shot from out her harbor, for a space we had biting polar weather, though all the time running away from it to the southward; and by every degree and minute of latitude which we sailed, gradually leaving that merciless winter, and all its intolerable weather behind us. It was one of those less lowering, but still grey and gloomy enough mornings of the transition, when with a fair wind the ship was rushing through the water with a vindictive sort of leaping and melancholy rapidity, that as I mounted to the deck at the call of the forenoon watch, so soon as I levelled my glance towards the taffrail, foreboding shivers ran over me. Reality outran apprehension; Captain Ahab stood upon his quarter-deck.

There seemed no sign of common bodily illness about him, nor of the recovery from any. He looked like a man cut away from the stake, when the fire has overrunningly wasted all the limbs without consuming them, or taking away one particle from their compacted aged robustness. His whole high, broad form, seemed made of solid bronze, and shaped in an unalterable mould, like Cellini's cast Perseus. Threading its way out from among his grey hairs, and continuing right down one side of his tawny scorched face and neck, till it disappeared in his clothing, you saw a slender rod-like mark, lividly whitish. It resembled that perpendicular seam sometimes made in the straight, lofty trunk of a great tree, when the upper lightning tearingly darts down it, and without wrenching a single twig, peels and grooves out the bark from top to bottom, ere running off into the soil, leaving the tree still greenly alive, but branded. Whether that mark was born with him, or whether it was the scar left by some desperate wound, no one could certainly say. By some tacit consent, throughout the voyage little or no allusion was made to it, especially by the mates. But once Tashtego's senior, an old Gay-Head Indian

among the crew, superstitiously asserted that not till he was full forty years old did Ahab become that way branded, and then it came upon him, not in the fury of any mortal fray, but in an elemental strife at sea. Yet, this wild hunt seemed inferentially negatived, by what a grey Manxman insinuated, an old sepulchral man, who, having never before sailed out of Nantucket, had never ere this laid eye upon wild Ahab.

Nevertheless, the old sea-traditions, the immemorial credulities, popularly invested this old Manxman with preternatural powers of discernment. So that no white sailor seriously contradicted him when he said that if ever Captain Ahab should be tranquilly laid out—which might hardly come to pass, so he muttered—then, whoever should do that last office for the dead, would find a birth-mark on him from crown to sole.

So powerfully did the whole grim aspect of Ahab affect me, and the livid brand which streaked it, that for the first few moments I hardly noted that not a little of this overbearing grimness was owing to the barbaric white leg upon which he partly stood. It had previously come to me that this ivory leg had at sea been fashioned from the polished bone of the sperm whale's jaw. “Aye, he was dismasted off Japan,” said the old Gay-Head Indian once; “but like his dismasted craft, he shipped another mast without coming home for it. He has a quiver of ‘em.”

I was struck with the singular posture he maintained. Upon each side of the Pequod's quarter-deck, and pretty close to the mizzen shrouds, there was an auger hole, bored about half an inch or so, into the plank. His bone steadied in that hole; one arm elevated, and holding by a shroud; Captain Ahab stood erect, looking straight out beyond the ship's ever-pitching prow. There was an infinity of firmest fortitude, a determinate, unsunderable willfulness, in the fixed and fearless, forward dedication of that glance. Not a word he spoke; nor did his officers say aught to him; though by all their minutest gestures and expressions, they plainly showed the uneasy, if not painful, consciousness of being under a troubled master-eye. And not only that, but moody stricken Ahab stood before them with a crucifixion in his face; in all the nameless regal overbearing dignity of some mighty woe.

Ere long, from his first visit in the air, he withdrew into his cabin. But after that morning, he was every day visible to the crew; either standing in his pivot-hole, or seated upon an ivory stool he had; or heavily walking the deck. As the sky grew less gloomy, indeed, began to grow a little genial, he became still less and less a recluse; as if, when the ship had sailed from home, nothing but the dead wintry bleakness of the sea had then kept him so secluded. And, by and by, it came to pass, that he was almost continually in the air; but, as yet, for all that he said, or perceptibly did, on the at last sunny deck, he seemed as unnecessary there as another mast. But the Pequod was only making a passage now; not regularly cruising; nearly all whaling preparatives needing supervision the mates were fully competent to, so that there was little or nothing, out of himself, to employ or excite Ahab, now; and thus chase away, for that one interval, the clouds that layer upon layer were piled upon his brow, as ever all clouds choose the loftiest peaks to pile themselves upon.

Nevertheless, ere long, the warm, warbling persuasiveness of the pleasant, holiday weather we came to, seemed gradually to charm him from his mood. For, as when the red-cheeked, dancing girls, April and May, trip home to the wintry, misanthropic woods, even the barest, ruggedest, most thunder-cloven old oak will at least send forth some few green sprouts, to welcome such glad-hearted visitants; so Ahab did, in the end, a little respond to the playful allurings of that girlish air. More than once did he put forth the faint blossom of a look, which, in any other man, would have soon flowered out in a smile.

CHAPTER XXXVI. THE QUARTER-DECK

(Enter Ahab: Then all.)

It was not a great while after the affair of the pipe, that one morning shortly after breakfast, Ahab, as was his wont, ascended the cabin-gangway to the deck. There most sea-captains usually walk at that hour, as country gentlemen, after the same meal, take a few turns in the garden.

Soon his steady, ivory stride was heard, as to and fro he paced his old rounds, upon planks so familiar to his tread, that they were all over dented, like geological stones, with the peculiar

mark of his walk. Did you fixedly gaze, too, upon that ribbed and dented brow, there also, you would see still stranger footprints—the footprints of his one unsleeping, ever-pacing thought.

But on the occasion in question, those dents looked deeper, even as his nervous step that morning left a deeper mark. And, so full of his thought was Ahab, that at every uniform turn that he made, now at the mainmast and now at the binnacle, you could almost see that thought turn in him as he turned, and pace in him as he paced; so completely possessing him, indeed, that it all but seemed the inward mould of every outer movement.

“D’ ye mark him, Flask?” whispered Stubb; “the chick that’s in him pecks the shell. ’Twill soon be out.”

The hours wore on;—Ahab now shut up within his cabin, anon, pacing the deck, with the same intense bigotry of purpose in his aspect.

It drew near the close of day. Suddenly he came to a halt by the bulwarks, and inserting his bone leg into the auger-hole there, and with one hand grasping a shroud, he ordered Starbuck to send everybody aft.

“Sir!” said the mate, astonished at an order seldom or never given on shipboard except in some extraordinary case.

“Send everybody aft,” repeated Ahab. “Mast-heads, there! come down!”

When the entire ship’s company were assembled, and with curious and not wholly unapprehensive faces were eyeing him, for he looked not unlike the weather horizon when a storm is coming up, Ahab, after rapidly glancing over the bulwarks, and then darting his eyes among the crew, started from his standpoint; and as though not a soul were nigh him resumed his heavy turns upon the deck. With bent head and half-slouched hat he continued to pace, unmindful of the wondering whispering among the men; till Stubb cautiously whispered to Flask, that Ahab must have summoned them there for the purpose of witnessing a pedestrian feat. But this did not last long. Vehemently pausing, he cried:—

“What do ye do when ye see a whale, men?”

“Sing out for him!” was the impulsive rejoinder from a score of clubbed voices.

“Good!” cried Ahab, with a wild approval in

his tones, observing the hearty animation into which his unexpected question had so magnetically thrown them.

"And what do ye next, men?"

"Lower away, and after him!"

"And what tune is it ye pull to, men?"

"A dead whale or a stove boat!"

More and more strangely and fiercely glad and approving grew the countenance of the old man at every shout; while the mainers began to gaze curiously at each other, as if marvelling how it was that they themselves became so excited at such seemingly purposeless questions.

But they were all cagerness again, as Ahab, now half-revolving in his pivot-hole, with one hand reaching high up a shroud, and tightly, almost convulsively grasping it, addressed them thus —

"All ye mast-headers have before now heard me give orders about a white whale. Look ye! d' ye see this Spanish ounce of gold?"—holding up a broad bright coin to the sun—"it is a sixteen dollar piece, men. D' ye see it? Mr. Starbuck, hand me yon top-maul."

While the mate was getting the hammer, Ahab, without speaking, was slowly rubbing the gold piece against the skirts of his jacket, as if to heighten its lustre, and without using any words was meanwhile lowly humming to himself, producing a sound so strangely muffled and inarticulate that it seemed the mechanical humming of the wheels of his vitality in him.

Receiving the top-maul from Starbuck, he advanced toward the mainmast with the hammer uplifted in one hand, exhibiting the gold with the other, and with a high raised voice exclaiming: "Whosoever of ye raises me a white-headed whale with a wrinkled brow and a crooked jaw; whosoever of ye raises me that white-headed whale, with three holes punctured in his starboard fluke—look ye, whosoever of ye raises me that same white whale, he shall have this gold ounce, my boys!"

"Huzza, huzza!" cried the seamen, as with swinging tarpaulins they hailed the act of nailing the gold to the mast.

"It's a white whale, I say," resumed Ahab, as he threw down the top-maul; "a white whale. Skin your eyes for him, men; look sharp for white water; if ye see but a bubble sing out."

All this while Tashtego, Daggoo, and Quee-

queg¹ had looked on with even more intense interest and surprise than the rest, and at the mention of the wrinkled brow and crooked jaw they had started as if each was separately touched by some specific recollection.

"Captain Ahab," said Tashtego, "that white whale must be the same that some call Moby-Dick."

"Moby-Dick?" shouted Ahab. "Do ye know the white whale then, Tash?"

"Does he fan-tail a little curious, sir, before he goes down?" said the Gay-Header deliberately.

"And has he a curious spout, too," said Daggoo, "very bushy, even for a parmacetty, and mighty quick, Captain Ahab?"

"And he have one, two, tree—oh! good many iron in him hide, too, captain," cried Queequeg disjointedly, "all twiske-tee betwisk, like him—him—" faltering hard for a word, and screwing his hand round and round as though uncorking a bottle—"like him—him—"

"Cork-screw!" cried Ahab, "ay, Queequeg, the harpoons lie all twisted and wrenched in him; ay, Daggoo, his spout is a big one, like a whole shock of wheat, and white as a pile of our Nantucket wool after the great annual sheep-shearing; ay, Tashtego, and he fan-tails like a split jib in a squall. Death and devils! men, it is Moby-Dick ye have seen—Moby Dick—Moby-Dick!"

"Captain Ahab," said Starbuck,² who, with Stubb and Flask, had thus far been eyeing his superior with increasing surprise, but at last seemed struck with a thought which somewhat explained all the wonder. "Captain Ahab, I have heard of Moby-Dick—but it was not Moby-Dick that took off thy leg?"

"Who told thee that?" cried Ahab; then pausing, "Ay, Starbuck; ay, my hearties all round, it was Moby-Dick that dismasted me, Moby-Dick that brought me to this dead stump I stand on now, Ay, ay," he shouted, with a terrific, loud, animal sob, like that of a heart-stricken moose; 'ay, ay! it was that accursed white whale that razed me; made a poor pegging lubber out of me for ever and a day!' Then tossing both arms,

¹ These three men are harpooners. Tashtego is an Indian; Daggoo, a gigantic Negro; and Queequeg, a South Sea Islander.

² Starbuck is the first mate. Stubb and Flask are the other mates.

with measureless imprecations he shouted out: "Ay, ay! and I'll chase him round Good Hope, and round the Horn, and round the Norway Maelstrom, and round perdition's flames before I give him up And this is what ye have shipped for, men! to chase that white whale on both sides of land, and over all sides of earth, till he spouts black blood and rolls fin out. What say ye, men, will ye splice hands on it, now? I think ye do look brave."

"Ay, ay!" shouted the harpooners and seamen, running closer to the excited old man, "a sharp eye for the White Whale; a sharp lance for Moby-Dick!"

"God bless ye," he seemed to half sob and half shout. "God bless ye, men. Steward! go draw the great measure of grog. But what's this long face about, Mr Starbuck, wilt thou not chase the White Whale? art not game for Moby-Dick?"

"I am game for this crooked jaw, and for the jaws of Death too, Captain Ahab, if it fairly comes in the way of the business we follow; but I came here to hunt whales, not my commander's vengeance. How many barrels will thy vengeance yield thee even if thou gettest it, Captain Ahab! It will not fetch thee much in our Nantucket market."

"Nantucket market! Hoot! But come closer, Starbuck; thou requirest a little lower layer. If money's to be the measure, man, and the accountants have computed their great counting-house the globe, by girdling it with guineas, one to every three parts of an inch; then, let me tell thee, that my vengeance will fetch a great premium *here!*"

"He smites his chest," whispered Stubb, "what's that for? methinks it rings most vast, but hollow."

"Vengeance on a dumb brute!" cried Starbuck, "that simply smote thee from blindest instinct! Madness! To be enraged with a dumb thing, Captain Ahab, seems blasphemous."

"Hark ye yet again,—the little lower layer. All visible objects, man, are but as pasteboard masks. But in each event—in the living act, the undoubted deed—there, some unknown but still reasoning thing puts forth the moldings of its features from behind the unreasoning mask. If man will strike, strike through the mask! How can the prisoner reach outside except by thrusting through the wall? To me, the White Whale is that wall, shoved near to me. Sometimes I

think there's naught beyond But 'tis enough He tasks me; he heaps me, I see in him outrageous strength, with an inscrutable malice sinewing it That inscrutable thing is chiefly what I hate; and be the White Whale agent, or be the White Whale principal, I will wreak that hate upon him. Talk not to me of blasphemy, man, I'd strike the sun if it insulted me. For could the sun do that, then could I do the other, since there is ever a sort of fair play herein, jealousy presiding over all creations But not my master, man, is even that fair play Who's over me? Truth hath no confines. Take off thine eye! more intolerable than fiends' glarings is a doltish stare! So, so; thou reddened and palest, my heat has melted thee to anger-glow But look ye, Starbuck, what is said in heat, that thing unsays itself. There are men from whom warm words are small indignity. I meant not to incense thee. Let it go. Look! see yonder Turkish cheeks of spotted tawn—living, breathing pictures painted by the sun The pagan leopards—the unrecking and unworshipping things, that live; and seek, and give no reasons for the torrid life they feel! The crew, man, the crew! Are they not one and all with Ahab, in this matter of the whale? See Stubb! he laughs! See yonder Chilian! he snorts to think of it. Stand up amid the general hurricane, thy one tost sapling cannot, Starbuck! And what is it? Reckon it. 'Tis but to help strike a fin; no wondrous feat for Starbuck What is it more? From this one poor hunt, then, the best lance out of all Nantucket, surely he will not hang back, when every foremasthand has clutched a whetstone! Ah, constraints seize thee; I see! the billow lifts thee! Speak, but speak!—Ay ay! thy silence, then, *that* voices thee. (*Aside*) Something shot from my dilated nostrils, he has inhaled it in his lungs. Starbuck now is mine; cannot oppose me now, without rebellion."

"God keep me!—keep us all!" murmured Starbuck lowly.

But in his joy at the enchanted, tacit acquiescence of the mate, Ahab did not hear his foreboding invocation; nor yet the low laugh from the hold; nor yet the presaging vibrations of the winds in the cordage; nor yet the hollow flap of the sails against the masts, as for a moment their hearts sank in. For again Starbuck's downcast eyes lighted up with the stubbornness of life; the subterranean laugh died away; the

winds blew on, the sails filled out, the ship heaved and rolled as before. Ah, ye admonitions and warnings! why stay ye not when ye come? But rather are ye predictions than warnings, ye shadows! Yet not so much predictions from without, as verifications of the foregoing things within. For with little external to constrain us, the innermost necessities in our being, these still drive us on.

"The measure! the measure!" cried Ahab.

Receiving the brimming pewter, and turning to the harpooners, he ordered them to produce their weapons. Then ranging them before him near the capstan, with their harpoons in their hands, while his three mates stood at his side with their lances, and the rest of the ship's company formed a circle round the group, he stood for an instant searchingly eyeing every man of his crew. But those wild eyes met his, as the bloodshot eyes of the prairie wolves meet the eye of their leader, ere he rushes on at their head in the trail of the bison; but, alas! only to fall into the hidden snare of the Indian.

"Drink and pass!" he cried, handing the heavy charged flagon to the nearest seaman. "The crew alone now drink. Round with it, round! Short draughts—long swallows, men; 'tis hot as Satan's hoof. So, so; it goes round excellently. It spirals in ye; forks out at the serpent-snapping eye. Well done; almost drained. That way it went, this way it comes. Hand it me—here's a hollow! Men, ye seem the years; so brimming life is gulped and gone. Steward, refill!"

"Attend now, my braves; I have mustered ye all round this capstan; and ye, mates, flank me with your lances; and ye, harpooners, stand there with your irons; and ye, stout mariners, ring me in, that I may in some sort revive a noble custom of my fishermen fathers before me O men, you will yet see that—Ha! boy, come back? bad pennies come not sooner. Hand it me. Why, now, this pewter had run brimming again, wert not thou St. Vitus' imp—away, thou ague!"

"Advance, ye mates! Cross your lances full before me. Well done! Let me touch the axis" So saying, with extended arm, he grasped the three level, radiating lances at their crossed centre; while so doing, suddenly and nervously twitched them; meanwhile, glancing intently from Starbuck to Stubb, from Stubb to Flask. It seemed as though, by some nameless, interior volition, he would fain have shocked into them the same

fiery emotion accumulated within the Leyden jar of his own magnetic life. The three mates quailed before his strong, sustained, and mystic aspect. Stubb and Flask looked sideways from him; the honest eye of Starbuck fell downright.

"In vain!" cried Ahab, "but, maybe, 'tis well. For did ye three but once take the full-forced shock, then mine own electric thing, *that* had perhaps expired from out me Perchance, too, it would have dropped ye dead. Perchance ye need it not. Down lances! And now, ye mates, I do appoint ye three cup-bearers to my three pagan kinsmen there—yon three most honourable gentlemen and nobleman, my valiant harpooners. Disdain the task? What, when the great Pope washes the feet of beggars, using his tiara for ewer? Oh, my sweet cardinals! your own condescension, *that* shall bend ye to it I do not order ye; ye will it. Cut your seizings and draw the poles, ye harpooners!"

Silently obeying the order, the three harpooners now stood with the detached part of their harpoons, some three feet long, held, barbs up, before him.

"Stab me not with that keen steel! Cant them, cant them over! know ye not the goblet end? Turn up the socket! So, so; now, ye cup-bearers, advance. The irons! take them; hold them while I fill!" Forthwith, slowly going from one officer to the other, he brimmed the harpoon sockets with the fiery waters from the pewter.

"Now, three to three, ye stand Commend the murderous chalices! Bestow them, ye who are now made parties to this indissoluble league. Ha! Starbuck! but the deed is done! Yon ratifying sun now waits to sit upon it. Drink, ye harpooners! drink and swear, ye men that man the deathful whaleboat's bow—Death to Moby-Dick! God hunt us all, if we do not hunt Moby-Dick to his death!" The long, barbed steel goblets were lifted; and to cries and maledictions against the White Whale, the spirits were simultaneously quaffed down with a hiss Starbuck paled, and turned, and shivered. Once more, and finally, the replenished pewter went the rounds among the frantic crew; when, waving his free hand to them, they all dispersed; and Ahab retired within his cabin.

CHAPTER XLI. MOBY-DICK

I, Ishmael, was one of that crew; my shouts had gone up with the rest; my oath had been welded with theirs; and stronger I shouted, and

more did I hammer and clinch my oath, because of the dread in my soul. A wild, mystical, sympathetic feeling was in me, Ahab's quenchless feud seemed mine. With greedy ears I learned the history of that murderous monster against whom I and all the others had taken our oaths of violence and revenge.

For some time past, though at intervals only, the unaccompanied, secluded White Whale had haunted those uncivilized seas most frequented by the Sperm Whale fishermen. But not all of them knew of his existence; only a few of them, comparatively, had knowingly seen him; while the number who as yet had actually and knowingly given battle to him, was small indeed. For, owing to the large number of whale-cruisers, the disorderly way they were sprinkled over the entire watery circumference, many of them adventurously pushing their quest along solitary latitudes, so as seldom or never for a whole twelvemonth or more on a stretch, to encounter a single news-telling sail of any sort; the inordinate length of each separate voyage; the irregularity of the times of sailing from home, all these, with other circumstances, direct and indirect, long obstructed the spread through the whole world-wide whaling-fleet of the special individualizing tidings concerning Moby-Dick. It was hardly to be doubted, that several vessels reported to have encountered, at such or such a time, or on such or such a meridian, a Sperm Whale of uncommon magnitude and malignity, which whale, after doing great mischief to his assailants, had completely escaped them; to some minds it was not an unfair presumption, I say, that the whale in question must have been no other than Moby-Dick. Yet as of late the Sperm whale fishery had been marked by various and not unfrequent instances of great ferocity, cunning, and malice in the monster attacked; therefore it was, that those who by accident ignorantly gave battle to Moby-Dick; such hunters, perhaps, for the most part, were content to ascribe the peculiar terrors he bred, more, as it were, to the perils of the Sperm Whale fishery at large, than to the individual cause. In that way, mostly, the disastrous encounter between Ahab and the whale had hitherto been popularly regarded.

And as for those who, previously hearing of the White Whale, by chance caught sight of him; in the beginning of the thing they had every one of them, almost, as boldly and fearlessly lowered

for him, as for any other whale of that species. But at length, such calamities did ensue in these assaults—not restricted to sprained wrists and ankles, broken limbs, or devouring amputations—but fatal to the last degree of fatality; those repeated disastrous repulses, all accumulating and piling their terrors upon Moby-Dick; those things had gone far to shake the fortitude of many brave hunters, to whom the story of the White Whale had eventually come.

Nor did wild rumors of all sorts fail to exaggerate, and still the more horribly the true histories of these deadly encounters. For not only do fabulous rumors naturally grow out of the very body of all surprising terrible events—as the smitten tree gives birth to its fungi, but, in maritime life, far more than in that of terra firma, wild rumors abound, wherever there is any adequate reality for them to cling to. And as the sea surpasses the land in this matter, so the whale fishery surpasses every other sort of maritime life, in the wonderfulness and fearfulness of the rumors which sometimes circulate there. For not only are whalers as a body unexempt from that ignorance and superstitiousness hereditary to all sailors, but of all sailors, they are by all odds the most directly brought into contact with whatever is appallingly astonishing in the sea; face to face they not only eye its greatest marvels, but, hand to jaw, give battle to them. Alone, in such remotest waters, that though you sailed a thousand miles, and passed a thousand shores, you would not come to any chiselled hearthstone, or aught hospitable beneath that part of the sun; in such latitudes and longitudes, pursuing too such a calling as he does, the whaleman is wrapped by influences all tending to make his fancy pregnant with many a mighty birth.

No wonder, then, that ever gathering volume from the mere transit over the wildest watery spaces, the outblown rumors of the White Whale did in the end incorporate with themselves all manner of morbid hints, and half-formed fœtal suggestions of supernatural agencies, which eventually invested Moby-Dick with new terrors unborrowed from anything that visibly appears. So that in many cases such a panic did he finally strike, that few who by these rumors, at least, had heard of the White Whale, few of those hunters were willing to encounter the perils of his jaw. - - -

Forced into familiarity, then, with such

prodigies as these, and knowing that after repeated, intrepid assaults, the White Whale had escaped alive, it cannot be much matter of surprise that some whalers should go still further in their superstitions; declaring Moby-Dick not only ubiquitous, but immortal (for immortality is but ubiquity in time); that though groves of spears should be planted in his flanks, he would still swim away unharmed, or if indeed he should ever be made to spout thick blood, such a sight would be but a ghastly deception, for again in unensanguined billows hundreds of leagues away, his unsullied jet would once more be seen.

But even stripped of these supernatural surroundings, there was enough in the earthly make and incontestable character of the monster to strike the imagination with unwonted power. For, it was not so much his uncommon bulk that so much distinguished him from other sperm whales, but, as was elsewhere thrown out—a peculiar snow-white wrinkled forehead, and a high, pyramidal white hump. These were his prominent features; the tokens whereby, even in the limitless, uncharted seas, he revealed his identity, at a long distance, to those who knew him.

The rest of his body was so streaked, and spotted, and marbled with the same shrouded hue, that, in the end, he had gained his distinctive appellation of the White Whale; a name, indeed, literally justified by his vivid aspect, when seen gliding at high noon through a dark blue sea, leaving a milky-way wake of creamy foam, all spangled with golden gleamings.

Nor was it his unwonted magnitude, nor his remarkable hue, nor yet his deformed lower jaw, that so much invested the whale with natural terror, as that unexampled, intelligent malignity which, according to specific accounts, he had over and over evinced in his assaults. More than all, his treacherous retreats struck more of dismay than perhaps aught else. For, when swimming before his exulting pursuers, with every apparent symptom of alarm, he had several times been known to turn round suddenly, and, bearing down upon them, either stave their boats to splinters, or drive them back in consternation to their ship.

Already several fatalities had attended his chase. But though similar disasters, however little bruited ashore, were by no means unusual

in the fishery; yet, in most instances, such seemed the White Whale's infernal aforethought of ferocity, that every dismembering or death that he caused, was not wholly regarded as having been inflicted by an unintelligent agent.

Judge, then, to what pitches of inflamed, distracted fury the minds of his more desperate hunters were impelled, when amid the chips of chewed boats, and the sinking limbs of torn comrades, they swam out of the white curds of the whale's direful wrath into the serene, exasperating sunlight, that smiled on, as if at a birth or a bridal.

His three boats stove around him, and oars and men both whirling in the eddies; one captain, seizing the line-knife from his broken prow, had dashed at the whale, as an Arkansas duellist at his foe, blindly seeking with a six inch blade to reach the fathom-deep life of the whale. That captain was Ahab. And then it was, that suddenly sweeping his sickle-shaped lower jaw beneath him, Moby-Dick had reaped away Ahab's leg, as a mower a blade of grass in the field. No turbaned Turk, no hired Venetian or Malay, could have smote him with more seeming malice. Small reason was there to doubt, then, that ever since that almost fatal encounter, Ahab had cherished a wild vindictiveness against the whale, all the more fell for that in his frantic morbidness he at last came to identify with him, not only all his bodily woes, but all his intellectual and spiritual exasperations. The White Whale swam before him as the monomaniac incarnation of all those malicious agencies which some deep men feel eating in them, till they are left living on with half a heart and half a lung. That intangible malignity which has been from the beginning; to whose dominion even the modern Christians ascribe one-half of the worlds; which the ancient Ophites of the east revered in their statue devil;—Ahab did not fall down and worship it like them; but deliriously transferring its idea to the abhorred White Whale, he pitted himself, all mutilated, against it. All that most maddens and torments; all that stirs up the lees of things; all truth with malice in it; all that cracks the sinews and cakes the brain; all the subtle demonisms of life and thought; all evil, to crazy Ahab, were visibly personified, and made practically assailable in Moby-Dick. He piled upon the whale's white hump the sum of all the general rage and hate

felt by his whole race from Adam down; and then, as if his chest had been a mortar, he burst his hot heart's shell upon it.

It is not probable that this monomania in him took its instant rise at the precise time of his bodily dismemberment. Then, in darting at the monster, knife in hand, he had but given loose to a sudden, passionate, corporal animosity; and when he received the stroke that tore him, he probably but felt the agonizing bodily laceration, but nothing more. Yet, when by this collision forced to turn towards home, and for long months of days and weeks, Ahab and anguish lay stretched together in one hammock, rounding in midwinter that dreary, howling Patagonian Cape; then it was, that his torn body and gashed soul bled into one another; and so interfusing, made him mad. That it was only then, on the homeward voyage, after the encounter, that the final monomania seized him, seems all but certain from the fact that, at intervals during the passage, he was a raving lunatic; and, though unlimbed of a leg, yet such vital strength lurked in his Egyptian chest, and was moreover intensified by his delirium, that his mates were forced to lace him fast, even there, as he sailed, raving in his hammock. In a strait-jacket, he swung to the mad rockings of the gales. And, when running into more sufferable latitudes, the ship, with mild stunsails spread, floated across the tranquil tropics, and, to all appearances, the old man's delirium seemed left behind him with the Cape Horn swells, and he came forth from his dark den into the blessed light and air; even then, when he bore that firm, collected front, however pale, and issued his calm orders once again; and his mates thanked God the direful madness was now gone; even then, Ahab, in his hidden self, raved on. Human madness is oftentimes a cunning and most feline thing. When you think it fled, it may have but become transfigured into some still subtler form. Ahab's full lunacy subsided not, but deepeningly contracted; like the unabated Hudson, when that noble Northman flows narrowly, but unfathomably through the Highland gorge. But, as in his narrow-flowing monomania, not one jot of Ahab's broad madness had been left behind; so in that broad madness, not one jot of his great natural intellect had perished. That before living agent, now became the living instrument. If such a furious trope may stand, his

special lunacy stormed his general sanity, and carried it, and turned all its concentrated cannon upon its own mad mark, so that far from having lost his strength, Ahab, to that one end, did now possess a thousandfold more potency than ever he had sanely brought to bear upon any one reasonable object.

This is much; yet Ahab's larger, darker, deeper part remains unhunted. But vain to popularize profundities, and all truth is profound. Winding far down within the very heart of this spiked Hotel de Cluny where we here stand—however grand and wonderful, now quit it;—and take your way, ye nobler, sadder souls, to those vast Roman halls of Thermes; where far beneath the fantastic towers of man's upper earth, his root of grandeur, his whole awful essence sits in bearded state; an antique buried beneath antiquities, and throned on torsoes! So with a broken throne, the great gods mock that captive king; so like a Caryatid, he patient sits, upholding on his frozen brow the piled entablatures of ages. Wind ye down there, ye prouder, sadder souls! question that proud, sad king! A family likeness! aye, he did beget ye, ye young exiled royalties; and from your grim sire only will the old State-secret come.

Now, in his heart, Ahab had some glimpse of this, namely: all my means are sane, my motive and my object mad. Yet without power to kill, or change, or shun the fact; he likewise knew that to mankind he did long dissemble; in some sort, did still. But that thing of his dissembling was only subject to his perceptibility, not to his will determinate. Nevertheless, so well did he succeed in that dissembling, that when with ivory leg he stepped ashore at last, no Nantucketer thought him otherwise than but naturally grieved, and that to the quick, with the terrible casualty which had overtaken him.

The report of his undeniable delirium at sea was likewise ascribed to a kindred cause. And so too, all the added moodiness which always afterwards, to the very day of sailing in the Pequod on the present voyage, sat brooding on his brow. Nor is it very unlikely, that far from distrusting his fitness for another whaling voyage, on account of such dark symptoms, the calculating people of that prudent isle were inclined to harbor the conceit, that for those very reasons he was all the better qualified and set on edge, for a pursuit so full of rage and wildness

as the bloody hunt of whales. Gnawed within and scorched without, with the infixed, unrelenting fangs of some incurable idea; such an one, could he be found, would seem the very man to dart his iron and lift his lance against the most appalling of all brutes. Or, if for any reason thought to be corporeally incapacitated for that, yet such an one would seem superlatively competent to cheer and howl on his underlings to the attack. But be all this as it may, certain it is, that with the mad secret of his unabated rage bolted up and keyed in him, Ahab had purposely sailed upon the present voyage with the one only and all-engrossing object of hunting the White Whale. Had any one of his old acquaintances on shore but half dreamed of what was lurking in him then, how soon would their aghast and righteous souls have wrenched the ship from such a fiendish man! They were bent on profitable cruises, the profit to be counted down in dollars from the mint. He was intent on an audacious, immitigable, and supernatural revenge.

Here, then, was this grey-headed, ungodly old man, chasing with curses a Job's whale round the world, at the head of a crew, too, chiefly made up of mongrel renegades, and castaways, and cannibals—morally enfeebled also, by the incompetence of mere unaided virtue or right-mindedness in Starbuck, the invulnerable jollity of indifference and recklessness in Stubb, and the pervading mediocrity in Flask. Such a crew, so officered, seemed specially picked and packed by some infernal fatality to help him to his monomaniac revenge. How was it that they so abundantly responded to the old man's ire—by what evil magic their souls were possessed, that at times his hate seemed almost theirs; the White Whale as much their insufferable foe as his; how all this came to be—what the White Whale was to them, or how to their unconscious understandings, also, in some dim unsuspected way, he might have seemed the gliding great demon of the seas of life,—all this to explain, would be to dive deeper than Ishmael can go. The subterranean miner that works in us all, how can one tell whither leads his shaft by the ever shifting, muffled sound of his pick? Who does not feel the irresistible arm drag? What skiff in tow of a seventy-four can stand still? For one, I gave myself up to the abandonment of the time and the place; but while yet all

a-rush to encounter the whale, could see naught in that brute but the deadliest ill

CHAPTER CXI. THE PACIFIC

5 When gliding by the Bashee isles we emerged at last upon the great South Sea, were it not for other things, I could have greeted my dear Pacific with uncounted thanks, for now the long supplication of my youth was answered; that serene ocean rolled eastwards from me a thousand leagues of blue.

There is, one knows not what sweet mystery about this sea, whose gently awful stirrings seem to speak of some hidden soul beneath; like those fabled undulations of the Ephesian sod over the buried Evangelist St. John. And meet it is, that over these sea-pastures, wide-rolling watery prairies and Potters' Fields of all four continents, the waves should rise and fall, and ebb and flow unceasingly; for here, millions of mixed shades and shadows, drowned dreams, somnambulisms, reveries; all that we call lives and souls, lie dreaming, dreaming, still; tossing like slumberers in their beds; the ever-rolling waves but made so by their restlessness.

To any meditative Magian rover, this serene Pacific, once beheld, must ever after be the sea of his adoption. It rolls the midmost waters of the world, the Indian ocean and Atlantic being but its arms. The same waves wash the moles of the new-built California towns, but yesterday planted by the recentest race of men, and lave the faded but still gorgeous skirts of Asiatic lands, older than Abraham; while all between float milky-ways of coral isles, and low-lying, endless, unknown Archipelagoes, and impenetrable Japans. Thus this mysterious, divine Pacific zones the world's whole bulk about; makes all coasts one bay to it; seems the tide-beating heart of earth. Lifted by those eternal swells, you needs must own the seductive god, bowing your head to Pan.

But few thoughts of Pan stirred Ahab's brain, as standing like an iron statue at his accustomed place beside the mizen rigging, with one nostril he unthinkingly snuffed the sugary musk from the Bashee isles (in whose sweet woods mild lovers must be walking), and with the other consciously inhaled the salt breath of the new found sea; that sea in which the hated White Whale must even then be swimming. Launched at length upon these almost final waters, and gliding

towards the Japanese cruising-ground, the old man's purpose intensified itself. His firm lips met like the lips of a vice, the Delta of his forehead's veins swelled like overlaiden brooks, in his very sleep, his ringing cry ran through the vaulted hull "Stern all! the White Whale spouts thick blood!"

BENITO CERENO

(1855, 1856)

This long short story, which anticipates the work of Joseph Conrad, was first published in *Putnam's Monthly Magazine* in October, November, and December, 1855, and was reprinted in Melville's *Piazza Tales* in 1856. Melville drew much of his material from Captain Amasa Delano's *A Narrative of Voyages and Travels* (1817), Chapter XVIII. See H. H. Scudder, "Melville's *Benito Cereno* and Captain Delano's Voyages," *PMLA*, XLIII, 502-532 (June, 1928) and Rosalie Feltenstein, "Melville's 'Benito Cereno,'" *American Literature*, XIX, 245-255 (November, 1947).

In the year 1799, Captain Amasa Delano, of Duxbury, in Massachusetts, commanding a large sealer and general trader, lay at anchor with a valuable cargo, in the harbor of St. Maria—a small, desert, uninhabited island towards the southern extremity of the long coast of Chili. There he had touched for water.

On the second day, not long after dawn, while lying in his berth, his mate came below, informing him that a strange sail was coming into the bay. Ships were then not so plenty in those waters as now. He rose, dressed, and went on deck.

The morning was one peculiar to that coast. Everything was mute and calm; everything gray. The sea, though undulated into long roods of swells, seemed fixed, and was sleeked at the surface like waved lead that has cooled and set in the smelter's mould. The sky seemed a gray surtout. Flights of troubled gray fowl, kith and kin with flights of troubled gray vapors among which they were mixed, skimmed low and fitfully over the waters, as swallows over meadows before storms. Shadows present, foreshadowing deeper shadows to come.

To Captain Delano's surprise, the stranger, viewed through the glass, showed no colors; though to do so upon entering a haven, however

unhabited in its shores, where but a single other ship might be lying, was the custom among peaceful seamen of all nations. Considering the lawlessness and loneliness of the spot, and the sort of stories, at that day, associated with those seas, Captain Delano's surprise might have deepened into some uneasiness had he not been a person of a singularly undistrustful good nature, not liable, except on extraordinary and repeated incentives, and hardly then, to indulge in personal alarms, any way involving the imputation of malign evil in man. Whether, in view of what humanity is capable, such a trait implies, along with a benevolent heart, more than ordinary quickness and accuracy of intellectual perception, may be left to the wise to determine.

But whatever misgivings might have obtruded on first seeing the stranger, would almost, in any seaman's mind, have been dissipated by observing that, the ship, in navigating into the harbor, was drawing too near the land; a sunken reef making out off her bow. This seemed to prove her a stranger, indeed, not only to the sealer, but the island; consequently, she could be no wonted freebooter on that ocean. With no small interest, Captain Delano continued to watch her—a proceeding not much facilitated by the vapors partly mantling the hull, through which the far matin light from her cabin streamed equivocally enough; much like the sun—by this time hemisphered on the rim of the horizon, and, apparently, in company with the strange ship, entering the harbor—which, wimpled by the same low, creeping clouds, showed not unlike a Lima intriguante's one sinister eye peering across the Plaza from the Indian loop-hole of her dusk *saya-y-manta*.

It might have been but a deception of the vapors, but, the longer the stranger was watched the more singular appeared her manoeuvres. Ere long it seemed hard to decide whether she meant to come in or no—what she wanted, or what she was about. The wind, which had breezed up a little during the night, was now extremely light and baffling, which the more increased the apparent uncertainty of her movements.

Surmising, at last, that it might be a ship in distress, Captain Delano ordered his whale-boat to be dropped, and, much to the wary opposition of his mate, prepared to board her, and, at the least, pilot her in. On the night previous, a

fishing-party of the seamen had gone a long distance to some detached rocks out of sight from the sealer, and, an hour or two before day-break, had returned, having met with no small success. Presuming that the stranger might have been long off soundings, the good captain put several baskets of the fish, for presents, into his boat, and so pulled away. From her continuing too near the sunken reef, deeming her in danger, calling to his men, he made all haste to apprise those on board of their situation. But, some time ere the boat came up, the wind, light though it was, having shifted, had headed the vessel off, as well as partly broken the vapors from about her.

Upon gaining a less remote view, the ship, when made signally visible on the verge of the leaden-hued swells, with the shreds of fog here and there raggedly furring her, appeared like a white-washed monastery after a thunderstorm, seen perched upon some dun cliff among the Pyrenees. But it was no purely fanciful resemblance which now, for a moment, almost led Captain Delano to think that nothing less than a ship-load of monks was before him. Peering over the bulwarks were what really seemed, in the hazy distance, throngs of dark cowl; while, fitfully revealed through the open port-holes, other dark moving figures were dimly descried, as of Black Friars pacing the cloisters.

Upon a still nigher approach, this appearance was modified, and the true character of the vessel was plain—a Spanish merchantman of the first class, carrying negro slaves, amongst other valuable freight, from one colonial port to another. A very large, and, in its time, a very fine vessel, such as in those days were at intervals encountered along that main; sometimes superseded Acapulco treasure-ships, or retired frigates of the Spanish king's navy, which, like superannuated Italian palaces, still, under a decline of masters, preserved signs of former state.

As the whale-boat drew more and more nigh, the cause of the peculiar pipe-clayed aspect of the stranger was seen in the slovenly neglect pervading her. The spars, ropes, and great part of the bulwarks, looked woolly, from long unacquaintance with the scraper, tar, and the brush. Her keel seemed laid, her ribs put together, and she launched, from Ezekiel's Valley of Dry Bones.

In the present business in which she was engaged, the ship's general model and rig appeared to have undergone no material change

from their original warlike and Froissart pattern. However, no guns were seen.

The tops were large, and were railed about with what had once been octagonal net-work, all now in sad disrepair. These tops hung overhead like three ruinous aviaries, in one of which was seen perched on a ratlin, a white noddy, a strange fowl, so called from its lethargic somnambulistic character, being frequently caught by hand at sea. Battered and mouldy, the castellated fore-castle seemed some ancient turret, long ago taken by assault, and then left to decay. Toward the stern, two high-raised quarter galleries—the balustrades here and there covered with dry, tindery sea-moss—opening out from the unoccupied state-cabin, whose dead-lights, for all the mild weather, were hermetically closed and calked—these tenantless balconies hung over the sea as if it were the grand Venetian canal. But the principal relic of faded grandeur was the ample oval of the shield-like stern-piece, intricately carved with the arms of Castile and Leon, medallioned about by groups of mythological or symbolical devices, uppermost and central of which was a dark satyr in a mask, holding his foot on the prostrate neck of a writhing figure, likewise masked.

Whether the ship had a figure-head, or only a plain beak, was not quite certain, owing to canvas wrapped about that part, either to protect it while undergoing a re-furbishing, or else decently to hide its decay. Rudely painted or chalked, as in a sailor freak, along the forward side of a sort of pedestal below the canvas, was the sentence, "*Seguid vuestro jefe*" (follow your leader); while upon the tarnished head-boards, near by, appeared, in stately capitals, once gilt, the ship's name "*SAN DOMINICK*," each letter streakingly corroded with tricklings of copper-spike rust; while, like mourning weeds, dark festoons of sea-grass slimily swept to and fro over the name, with every hearse-like roll of the hull.

As, at last, the boat was hooked from the bow along toward the gangway amidship, its keel, while yet some inches separated from the hull, harshly grated as on a sunken coral reef. It proved a huge bunch of conglobated barnacles adhering below the water to the side like a wen—a token of baffling airs and long calms passed somewhere in those seas.

Climbing the side, the visitor was at once surrounded by a clamorous throng of whites and

blacks, but the latter outnumbering the former more than could have been expected, negro transportation-ship as the stranger in port was. But, in one language, and as with one voice, all poured out a common tale of suffering; in which the negresses, of whom there were not a few, exceeded the others in their dolorous vehemence. The scurvy, together with a fever, had swept off a great part of their number, more especially the Spaniards. Off Cape Horn, they had narrowly escaped shipwreck; then, for days together, they had lain tranced without wind; their provisions were low; their water next to none; their lips that moment were baked.

While Captain Delano was thus made the mark of all eager tongues, his one eager glance took in all the faces, with every other object about him.

Always upon first boarding a large and populous ship at sea, especially a foreign one, with a nondescript crew such as Lascars or Manilla men, the impression varies in a peculiar way from that produced by first entering a strange house with strange inmates in a strange land. Both house and ship—the one by its walls and blinds, the other by its high bulwarks like ramparts—hoard from view their interiors till the last moment; but in the case of the ship there is this addition; that the living spectacle it contains, upon its sudden and complete disclosure, has, in contrast with the blank ocean which zones it, something of the effect of enchantment. The ship seems unreal; these strange costumes, gestures, and faces, but a shadowy tableau just emerged from the deep, which directly must receive back what it gave.

Perhaps it was some such influence, as above is attempted to be described, which, in Captain Delano's mind, heightened whatever, upon a staid scrutiny, might have seemed unusual; especially the conspicuous figures of four elderly grizzled negroes, their heads like black, doddered willow tops, who, in venerable contrast to the tumult below them, were crouched sphynx-like, one on the starboard cat-head, another on the larboard, and the remaining pair face to face on the opposite bulwarks above the main-chains. They each had bits of unstranded old junk in their hands, and, with a sort of stoical self-content, were picking the junk into oakum, a small heap of which lay by their sides. They accompanied the task with a continuous, low,

monotonous chant; droning and druling away like so many gray-headed bag-pipers playing a funeral march.

The quarter-deck rose into an ample elevated poop, upon the forward verge of which, lifted, like the oakum-pickers, some eight feet above the general throng, sat along in a row, separated by regular spaces, the cross-legged figures of six other blacks; each with a rusty hatchet in his hand, which, with a bit of brick and a rag, he was engaged like a scullion in scouring; while between each two was a small stack of hatchets, their rusted edges turned forward awaiting a like operation. Though occasionally the four oakum-pickers would briefly address some person or persons in the crowd below, yet the six hatchet-polishers neither spoke to others, nor breathed a whisper among themselves, but sat intent upon their task, except at intervals, when, with the peculiar love in negroes of uniting industry with pastime, two-and-two they sideways clashed their hatchets together, like cymbals, with a barbarous din. All six, unlike the generality, had the raw aspect of unsophisticated Africans.

But that first comprehensive glance which took in those ten figures, with scores less conspicuous, rested but an instant upon them, as, impatient of the hubbub of voices, the visitor turned in quest of whomsoever it might be that commanded the ship.

But as if not unwilling to let nature make known her own case among his suffering charge, or else in despair of restraining it for the time, the Spanish captain, a gentlemanly, reserved-looking, and rather young man to a stranger's eye, dressed with singular richness, but bearing plain traces of recent sleepless cares and disquietudes, stood passively by, leaning against the main-mast, at one moment casting a dreary, spiritless look upon his excited people, at the next an unhappy glance toward his visitor. By his side stood a black of small stature, in whose rude face, as occasionally, like a shepherd's dog, he mutely turned it up into the Spaniard's, sorrow and affection were equally blended.

Struggling through the throng, the American advanced to the Spaniard, assuring him of his sympathies, and offering to render whatever assistance might be in his power. To which the Spaniard returned, for the present but grave and ceremonious acknowledgments, his national for-

mality dusk'd by the saturnine mood of ill-health

But losing no time in mere compliments, Captain Delano, returning to the gangway, had his basket of fish brought up; and as the wind still continued light, so that some hours at least must elapse ere the ship could be brought to the anchorage, he bade his men return to the sealer, and fetch back as much water as the whale-boat could carry, with whatever soft bread the steward might have, all the remaining pumpkins on board, with a box of sugar, and a dozen of his private bottles of cider.

Not many minutes after the boat's pushing off, to the vexation of all, the wind entirely died away, and the tide turning, began drifting back the ship helplessly seaward. But trusting this would not long last, Captain Delano sought, with good hopes, to cheer up the strangers, feeling no small satisfaction that, with persons in their condition he could—thanks to his frequent voyages along the Spanish Main—converse with some freedom in their native tongue.

While left alone with them, he was not long in observing some things tending to heighten his first impressions; but surprise was lost in pity, both for the Spaniards and blacks, alike evidently reduced from scarcity of water and provisions; while long-continued suffering seemed to have brought out the less good-natured qualities of the negroes, besides, at the same time, impairing the Spaniard's authority over them. But, under the circumstances, precisely this condition of things was to have been anticipated. In armies, navies, cities, or families, in nature herself, nothing more relaxes good order than misery. Still, Captain Delano was not without the idea, that had Benito Cereno been a man of greater energy, misrule would hardly have come to the present pass. But the debility, constitutional or induced by the hardships, bodily and mental, of the Spanish captain, was too obvious to be overlooked. A prey to settled dejection, as if long mocked with hope he would not now indulge it, even when it had ceased to be a mock, the prospect of that day or evening at furthest, lying at anchor, with plenty of water for his people, and a brother captain to counsel and befriend, seemed in no perceptible degree to encourage him. His mind appeared unstrung, if not still more seriously affected. Shut up in these oaken walls, chained to one dull round of command, whose uncondi-

tionality cloyed him, like some hypochondriac abbot he moved slowly about, at times suddenly pausing, starting, or staring, biting his lip, biting his finger-nail, flushing, paling, twitching his beard, with other symptoms of an absent or moody mind. This distempered spirit was lodged, as before hinted, in as distempered a frame. He was rather tall, but seemed never to have been robust, and now with nervous suffering was almost worn to a skeleton. A tendency to some pulmonary complaint appeared to have been lately confirmed. His voice was like that of one with lungs half gone—hoarsely suppressed, a husky whisper. No wonder that, as in this state he tottered about, his private servant apprehensively followed him. Sometimes the negro gave his master his arm, or took his handkerchief out of his pocket for him; performing these and similar offices with that affectionate zeal which transmutes into something filial or fraternal acts in themselves but menial; and which has gained for the negro the repute of making the most pleasing body-servant in the world; one, too, whom a master need be on no stiffly superior terms with, but may treat with familiar trust; less a servant than a devoted companion.

Marking the noisy indolence of the blacks in general, as well as what seemed the sullen inefficiency of the whites, it was not without humane satisfaction that Captain Delano witnessed the steady good conduct of Babo.

But the good conduct of Babo, hardly more than the ill-behavior of others, seemed to withdraw the half-lunatic Don Benito from his cloudy languor. Not that such precisely was the impression made by the Spaniard on the mind of his visitor. The Spaniard's individual unrest was, for the present, but noted as a conspicuous feature in the ship's general affliction. Still, Captain Delano was not a little concerned at what he could not help taking for the time to be Don Benito's unfriendly indifference toward himself. The Spaniard's manner, too, conveyed a sort of sour and gloomy disdain, which he seemed at no pains to disguise. But this the American in charity ascribed to the harassing effects of sickness, since, in former instances, he had noted that there are peculiar natures on whom prolonged physical suffering seems to cancel every social instinct of kindness; as if forced to black bread themselves, they deemed it but equity that each person coming nigh them should, indirectly,

by some slight or affront, be made to partake of their fare.

But ere long Captain Delano bethought him that, indulgent as he was at the first, in judging the Spaniard, he might not, after all, have exercised charity enough. At bottom it was Don Benito's reserve which displeased him; but the same reserve was shown toward all but his personal attendant. Even the formal reports which, according to sea-usage, were at stated times made to him by some petty underling, either a white, mulatto or black, he hardly had patience enough to listen to, without betraying contemptuous aversion. His manner upon such occasions was, in its degree, not unlike that which might be supposed to have been his imperial countryman's, Charles V., just previous to the anchoritish retirement of that monarch from the throne.

This splenetic disrelish of his place was evinced in almost every function pertaining to it. Proud as he was moody, he condescended to no personal mandate. Whatever special orders were necessary, their delivery was delegated to his body-servant, who in turn transferred them to their ultimate destination, through runners, alert Spanish boys or slave boys, like pages or pilot-fish within easy call continually hovering round Don Benito. So that to have beheld this undemonstrative invalid gliding about, apathetic and mute, no landsman could have dreamed that in him was lodged a dictatorship beyond which, while at sea, there was no earthly appeal.

Thus, the Spaniard, regarded in his reserve, seemed as the involuntary victim of mental disorder. But, in fact, his reserve might, in some degree, have proceeded from design. If so, then here was evinced the unhealthy climax of that icy though conscientious policy, more or less adopted by all commanders of large ships, which, except in signal emergencies, obliterates alike the manifestation of sway with every trace of sociality; transforming the man into a block, or rather into a loaded cannon, which, until there is call for thunder, has nothing to say.

Viewing him in this light, it seemed but a natural token of the perverse habit induced by a long course of such hard self-restraint, that, notwithstanding the present condition of his ship, the Spaniard should still persist in a demeanor, which, however harmless, or it may be, appropriate, in a well-appointed vessel, such as the San Dominick might have been at the outset

of the voyage, was anything but judicious now. But the Spaniard, perhaps, thought that it was with captains as with gods reserve, under all events, must still be their cue. But probably this appearance of slumbering dominion might have been but an attempted disguise to conscious imbecility—not deep policy, but shallow device. But be all this as it might, whether Don Benito's manner was designed or not, the more Captain Delano noted its pervading reserve, the less he felt uneasiness at any particular manifestation of that reserve towards himself.

Neither were his thoughts taken up by the captain alone. Wonted to the quiet orderliness of the sealer's comfortable family of a crew, the noisy confusion of the San Dominick's suffering host repeatedly challenged his eye. Some prominent breaches, not only of discipline but of decency, were observed. These Captain Delano could not but ascribe, in the main, to the absence of those subordinate deck-officers to whom, along with higher duties, is entrusted what may be styled the police department of a populous ship. True, the old oakum-pickers appeared at times to act the part of monitorial constables to their countrymen, the blacks; but though occasionally succeeding in allaying trifling outbreaks now and then between man and man, they could do little or nothing toward establishing general quiet. The San Dominick was in the condition of a transatlantic emigrant ship, among whose multitude of living freight are some individuals, doubtless, as little troublesome as crates and bales; but the friendly remonstrances of such with their ruder companions are of not so much avail as the unfriendly arm of the mate. What the San Dominick wanted was, what the emigrant ship has, stern superior officers. But on these decks not so much as a fourth-mate was to be seen.

The visitor's curiosity was roused to learn the particulars of those mishaps which had brought about such absenteeism, with its consequences; because, though deriving some inkling of the voyage from the wails which at the first moment had greeted him, yet of the details no clear understanding had been had. The best account would, doubtless, be given by the captain. Yet at first the visitor was loth to ask it, unwilling to provoke some distant rebuff. But plucking up courage, he at last accosted Don Benito, renewing the expression of his benevolent interest,

adding, that did he (Captain Delano) but know the particulars of the ship's misfortunes, he would, perhaps, be better able in the end to relieve them. Would Don Benito favor him with the whole story

Don Benito faltered, then, like some somnambulist suddenly interfered with, vacantly stared at his visitor, and ended by looking down on the deck. He maintained this posture so long, that Captain Delano, almost equally disconcerted, and involuntarily almost as rude, turned suddenly from him, walking forward to accost one of the Spanish scamen for the desired information. But he had hardly gone five paces when, with a sort of eagerness Don Benito invited him back, regretting his momentary absence of mind, and professing readiness to gratify him

While most part of the story was being given, the two captains stood on the after part of the main-deck, a privileged spot, no one being near but the servant.

"It is now a hundred and ninety days," began the Spaniard, in his husky whisper, "that this ship, well officered and well manned, with several cabin passengers—some fifty Spaniards in all—sailed from Buenos Ayres bound to Lima, with a general cargo, Paraguay tea and the like—and," pointed forward, "that parcel of negroes, now not more than a hundred and fifty, as you see, but then numbering over three hundred souls. Off Cape Horn we had heavy gales. In one moment, by night, three of my best officers, with fifteen sailors, were lost, with the main-yard; the spar snapping under them in the slings, as they sought, with heavers, to beat down the icy sail. To lighten the hull, the heavier sacks of mata were thrown into the sea, with most of the water-pipes lashed on deck at the time. And this last necessity it was, combined with the prolonged detentions afterwards experienced, which eventually brought about our chief causes of suffering. When—"

Here there was a sudden fainting attack of his cough, brought on, no doubt, by his mental distress. His servant sustained him, and drawing a cordial from his pocket placed it to his lips. He a little revived. But unwilling to leave him unsupported while yet imperfectly restored, the black with one arm still encircled his master, at the same time keeping his eye fixed on his face, as if to watch for the first sign of complete restoration, or relapse, as the event might prove.

The Spaniard proceeded, but brokenly and obscurely, as one in a dream.

—"Oh, my God! rather than pass through what I have, with joy I would have hailed the most terrible gales, but—"

His cough returned and with increased violence; this subsiding, with reddened lips and closed eyes he fell heavily against his supporter.

"His mind wanders. He was thinking of the plague that followed the gales," plaintively sighed the servant; "my poor, poor master!" wringing one hand, and with the other wiping the mouth. "But be patient, Señor," again turning to Captain Delano, "these fits do not last long; master will soon be himself."

Don Benito reviving, went on, but as this portion of the story was very brokenly delivered, the substance only will here be set down.

It appeared that after the ship had been many days tossed in storms off the Cape, the scurvy broke out, carrying off numbers of the whites and blacks. When at last they had worked round into the Pacific, their spars and sails were so damaged, and so inadequately handled by the surviving mariners, most of whom were become invalids, that, unable to lay her northerly course by the wind, which was powerful, the unmanageable ship, for successive days and nights, was blown northwestward, where the breeze suddenly deserted her, in unknown waters, to sultry calms. The absence of the water-pipes now proved as fatal to life as before their presence had menaced it. Induced, or at least aggravated, by the more than scanty allowance of water, a malignant fever followed the scurvy, with the excessive heat of the lengthened calm, making such short work of it as to sweep away, as by billows, whole families of the Africans, and a yet larger number, proportionably, of the Spaniards, including, by a luckless fatality, every remaining officer on board. Consequently, in the smart west winds eventually following the calm, the already rent sails, having to be simply dropped, not furled, at need, had been gradually reduced to the beggar's rags they were now. To procure substitutes for his lost sailors, as well as supplies of water and sails, the captain, at the earliest opportunity, had made for Baldivia, the southernmost civilized port of Chili and South America; but upon nearing the coast the thick weather had prevented him from so much as sighting that harbor. Since which period, almost without a crew, and almost with-

out canvas and almost without water, and, at intervals, giving its added dead to the sea, the San Dominick had been battle-dored about by contrary winds, inveigled by currents, or grown weedy in calms. Like a man lost in woods, more than once she had doubled upon her own track.

"But throughout these calamities," huskily continued Don Benito, painfully turning in the half embrace of his servant, "I have to thank those negroes you see, who, though to your inexperienced eyes appearing unruly, have, indeed, conducted themselves with less of restlessness than even their owner could have thought possible under such circumstances"

Here he again fell faintly back. Again his mind wandered; but he rallied, and less obscurely proceeded.

"Yes, their owner was quite right in assuring me that no no fetters would be needed with his blacks; so that while, as is wont in this transportation, those negroes have always remained upon deck—not thrust below, as in the Guineamen—they have, also, from the beginning, been freely permitted to range within given bounds at their pleasure."

Once more the faintness returned—his mind roved—but, recovering, he resumed:

"But it is Babo here to whom, under God, I owe not only my own preservation, but likewise to him, chiefly, the merit is due, of pacifying his more ignorant brethren, when at intervals tempted to murmurings."

"Ah, master," sighed the black, bowing his face, "don't speak of me; Babo is nothing, what Babo has done was but duty."

"Faithful fellow!" cried Captain Delano. "Don Benito, I envy you such a friend; slave I cannot call him."

As master and man stood before him, the black upholding the white, Captain Delano could not but bethink him of the beauty of that relationship which could present such a spectacle of fidelity on the one hand and confidence on the other. The scene was heightened by the contrast in dress, denoting their relative positions. The Spaniard wore a loose Chili jacket of dark velvet; white small-clothes and stockings, with silver buckles at the knee and instep; a high-crowned sombrero, of fine grass; a slender sword, silver mounted, hung from a knot in his sash—the last being an almost invariable adjunct, more for utility than ornament, of a South American gen-

tleman's dress to this hour. Excepting when his occasional nervous contortions brought about disarray, there was a certain precision in his attire, curiously at variance with the unsightly disorder around: especially in the belittered Ghetto, forward of the main-mast, wholly occupied by the blacks

The servant wore nothing but wide trowsers, apparently, from their coarseness and patches, made out of some old topsail; they were clean, and confined at the waist by a bit of unstranded rope, which, with his composed, deprecatory air at times, made him look something like a begging friar of St. Francis.

However unsuitable for the time and place, at least in the blunt-thinking American's eyes, and however strangely surviving in the midst of all his afflictions, the toilette of Don Benito might not, in fashion at least, have gone beyond the style of the day among South Americans of his class. Though on the present voyage sailing from Buenos Ayres, he had avowed himself a native and resident of Chili, whose inhabitants had not so generally adopted the plain coat and once plebeian pantaloons; but, with a becoming modification, adhered to their provincial costume, picturesque as any in the world. Still, relatively to the pale history of the voyage, and his own pale face, there seemed something so incongruous in the Spaniard's apparel, as almost to suggest the image of an invalid courtier tottering about London streets in the time of the plague

The portion of the narrative which, perhaps, most excited interest, as well as some surprise, considering the latitudes in question, was the long calms spoken of, and more particularly the ship's so long drifting about. Without communicating the opinion, of course, the American could not but impute at least part of the detentions both to clumsy seamanship and faulty navigation. Eyeing Don Benito's small, yellow hands, he easily inferred that the young captain had not got into command at the hawse-hole but the cabin-window; and if so, why wonder at incompetence, in youth, sickness, and gentility united?

But drowning criticism in comparison, after a fresh repetition of his sympathies, Captain Delano, having heard out his story, not only engaged, as in the first place, to see Don Benito and his people supplied in their immediate bodily needs, but, also, now further promised to assist him in procuring a large permanent supply of

water, as well as some sails and rigging; and, though it would involve no small embarrassment to himself, yet he would spare three of his best seamen for temporary deck officers; so that without delay the ship might proceed to Conception, there fully to refit for Lima, her destined port.

Such generosity was not without its effect, even upon the invalid. His face lighted up; eager and hectic, he met the honest glance of his visitor. With gratitude he seemed overcome.

"This excitement is bad for master," whispered the servant, taking his arm, and with soothing words gently drawing him aside.

When Don Benito returned, the American was pained to observe that his hopefulness, like the sudden kindling in his cheek, was but febrile and transient.

Ere long, with a joyless mien, looking up towards the poop, the host invited his guest to accompany him there, for the benefit of what little breath of wind might be stirring.

As, during the telling of the story, Captain Delano had once or twice started at the occasional cymballing of the hatchet-polishers, wondering why such an interruption should be allowed, especially in that part of the ship, and in the ears of an invalid; and moreover, as the hatchets had anything but an attractive look, and the handlers of them still less so, it was, therefore, to tell the truth, not without some lurking reluctance, or even shrinking, it may be, that Captain Delano, with apparent complaisance, acquiesced in his host's invitation. The more so, since, with an untimely caprice of punctilio, rendered distressing by his cadaverous aspect, Don Benito, with Castilian bows, solemnly insisted upon his guest's preceding him up the ladder leading to the elevation; where, one on each side of the last step, sat for armorial supporters and sentries two of the ominous file. Gingerly enough stepped good Captain Delano between them, and in the instant of leaving them behind, like one running the gauntlet, he felt an apprehensive twitch in the calves of his legs.

But when, facing about, he saw the whole file, like so many organ-grinders, still stupidly intent on their work, unmindful of everything beside, he could not but smile at his late fidgety panic.

Presently, while standing with his host, looking forward upon the decks below, he was struck by one of those instances of insubordination previously alluded to. Three black boys, with two

Spanish boys, were sitting together on the hatchets, scraping a rude wooden platter, in which some scanty mess had recently been cooked. Suddenly, one of the black boys, enraged at a word dropped by one of his white companions, seized a knife, and, though called to forbear by one of the oakum-pickers, struck the lad over the head, inflicting a gash from which blood flowed.

In amazement, Captain Delano inquired what this meant. To which the pale Don Benito dully muttered, that it was merely the sport of the lad.

"Pretty serious sport, truly," rejoined Captain Delano. "Had such a thing happened on board the Bachelor's Delight, instant punishment would have followed."

At these words the Spaniard turned upon the American one of his sudden, staring, half-lunatic looks, then, relapsing into his torpor, answered, "Doubtless, doubtless, Señor."

Is it, thought Captain Delano, that this helpless man is one of those paper captains I've known, who by policy wink at what by power they cannot put down? I know no sadder sight than a commander who has little of command but the name.

"I should think, Don Benito," he now said, glancing towards the oakum-picker who had sought to interfere with the boys, "that you would find it advantageous to keep all your blacks employed, especially the younger ones, no matter at what useless task, and no matter what happens to the ship. Why, even with my little band, I find such a course indispensable. I once kept a crew on my quarter-deck thrumming mats for my cabin, when, for three days, I had given up my ship—mats, men, and all—for a speedy loss, owing to the violence of a gale, in which we could do nothing but helplessly drive before it."

"Doubtless, doubtless," muttered Don Benito.

"But," continued Captain Delano, again glancing upon the oakum-pickers and then at the hatchet-polishers, near by, "I see you keep some, at least, of your host employed."

"Yes," was again the vacant response.

"Those old men there, shaking their paws from their pulpits," continued Captain Delano, pointing to the oakum-pickers, "seem to act the part of old dominies to the rest, little heeded as their admonitions are at times. Is this voluntary on their part, Don Benito, or have you ap-

pointed them shepherds to your flock of black sheep?"

"What posts they fill, I appointed them," rejoined the Spaniard in an acrid tone, as if resenting some supposed satiric reflection.

"And these others, these Ashantee conjurors here," continued Captain Delano, rather uneasily eyeing the brandished steel of the hatchet-polishers, where, in spots, it had been brought to a shine, "this seems a curious business they are at, Don Benito?"

"In the gales we met," answered the Spaniard, "what of our general cargo was not thrown overboard was much damaged by the brine. Since coming into calm weather, I have had several cases of knives and hatchets daily brought up for overhauling and cleaning."

"A prudent idea, Don Benito. You are part owner of ship and cargo, I presume; but not of the slaves, perhaps?"

"I am owner of all you see," impatiently returned Don Benito, "except the main company of blacks, who belonged to my late friend Alexandro Aranda."

As he mentioned this name, his air was heart-broken; his knees shook; his servant supported him.

Thinking he divined the cause of such unusual emotion, to confirm his surmise, Captain Delano, after a pause, said: "And may I ask, Don Benito, whether—since awhile ago you spoke of some cabin passengers—the friend, whose loss so afflicts you, at the outset of the voyage accompanied his blacks?"

"Yes."

"But died of the fever?"

"Died of the fever.—Oh, could I but—"

Again quivering, the Spaniard paused.

"Pardon me," said Captain Delano, lowly, "but I think that, by a sympathetic experience, I conjecture, Don Benito, what it is what gives the keener edge to your grief. It was once my hard fortune to lose at sea, a dear friend, my own brother, then supercargo. Assured of the welfare of his spirit, its departure I could have borne like a man; but that honest eye, that honest hand—both of which had so often met mine—and that warm heart; all, all—like scraps to the dogs—to throw all to the sharks! It was then I vowed never to have for fellow-voyager a man I loved, unless, unbeknown to him, I had provided every requisite, in case of a fatality, for embalm-

ing his mortal part for interment on shore. Were your friend's remains now on board this ship, Don Benito, not thus strangely would the mention of his name affect you."

5 "On board this ship?" echoed the Spaniard. Then, with horrified gestures, as directed against some spectre, he unconsciously fell into the ready arms of his attendant, who, with a silent appeal toward Captain Delano, seemed beseeching him not again to broach a theme so unspeakably distressing to his master.

This poor fellow now, thought the pained American, is the victim of that sad superstition which associates goblins with the deserted body of man, as ghosts with an abandoned house. How unlike are we made! What to me, in like case, would have been a solemn satisfaction, the bare suggestion, even, terrifies the Spaniard into this trance. Poor Alexandro Aranda! what would you say could you here see your friend—who, on former voyages, when you, for months, were left behind, has, I dare say, often longed, and longed, for one peep at you—now transported with terror at the least thought of having you anyway nigh him.

At this moment, with a dreary grave-yard toll, betokening a flaw, the ship's fore-castle bell, smote by one of the grizzled oakum-pickers, proclaimed ten o'clock, through the leaden calm; when Captain Delano's attention was caught by the moving figure of a gigantic black, emerging from the general crowd below, and slowly advancing towards the elevated poop. An iron collar was about his neck, from which depended a chain, thrice wound round his body; the terminating links padlocked together at a broad band of iron, his girdle.

35 "How like a mute Atufal moves," murmured the servant.

The black mounted the steps of the poop, and, like a brave prisoner, brought up to receive sentence, stood in unquailing muteness before Don Benito, now recovered from his attack.

At the first glimpse of his approach, Don Benito had started, a resentful shadow swept over his face; and, as with the sudden memory of bootless rage, his white lips glued together.

This is some mulish mutineer, thought Captain Delano, surveying, not without a mixture of admiration, the colossal form of the negro.

50 "See, he waits your question, master," said the servant.

Thus reminded, Don Benito, nervously averting his glance, as if shunning, by anticipation, some rebellious response, in a disconcerted voice, thus spoke.—

"Atufal, will you ask my pardon now?"

The black was silent.

"Again, master," murmured the servant, with bitter upbraiding eyeing his countryman, "again, master; he will bend to master yet."

"Answer," said Don Benito, still averting his glance, "say but the one word, *pardon*, and your chains shall be off."

Upon this, the black, slowly raising both arms, let them lifelessly fall, his links clanking, his head bowed; as much as to say, "No, I am content."

"Go," said Don Benito, with inkept and unknown emotion.

Deliberately as he had come, the black obeyed

"Excuse me, Don Benito," said Captain Delano, "but this scene surprises me; what means it, pray?"

"It means that that negro alone, of all the band, has given me peculiar cause of offence. I have put him in chains; I——"

Here he paused; his hand to his head, as if there were a swimming there, or a sudden bewilderment of memory had come over him; but meeting his servant's kindly glance seemed reassured, and proceeded:—

"I could not scourge such a form. But I told him he must ask my pardon. As yet he has not. At my command, every two hours he stands before me."

"And how long has this been?"

"Some sixty days."

"And obedient in all else? And respectful?"

"Yes."

"Upon my conscience, then," exclaimed Captain Delano, impulsively, "he has a royal spirit in him, this fellow."

"He may have some right to it," bitterly returned Don Benito; "he says he was king in his own land."

"Yes," said the servant, entering a word, "those slits in Atufal's ears once held wedges of gold; but poor Babo here, in his own land, was only a poor slave; a black man's slave was Babo, who now is the white's."

Somewhat annoyed by these conversational familiarities, Captain Delano turned curiously upon the attendant, then glanced inquiringly at

his master, but, as if long wonted to these little informalities, neither master nor man seemed to understand him.

"What, pray, was Atufal's offence, Don Benito?" asked Captain Delano, "if it was not something very serious, take a fool's advice, and, in view of his general docility, as well as in some natural respect for his spirit, remit his penalty."

"No, no, master never will do that," here murmured the servant to himself, "proud Atufal must first ask master's pardon. The slave there carries the padlock, but master here carries the key."

His attention thus directed, Captain Delano now noticed for the first time, that, suspended by a slender silken cord, from Don Benito's neck, hung a key. At once, from the servant's muttered syllables, divining the key's purpose, he smiled and said—"So, Don Benito—padlock and key—significant symbols, truly."

Biting his lip, Don Benito faltered.

Though the remark of Captain Delano, a man of such native simplicity as to be incapable of satire or irony, had been dropped in playful allusion to the Spaniard's singularly evidenced lordship over the black; yet the hypochondriac seemed in some way to have taken it as a malicious reflection upon his confessed inability thus far to break down, at least, on a verbal summons, the entrenched will of the slave. Deploring this supposed misconception, yet despairing of correcting it, Captain Delano shifted the subject; but finding his companion more than ever withdrawn, as if still slowly digesting the lees of the presumed affront above-mentioned, by-and-by Captain Delano likewise became less talkative, oppressed, against his own will, by what seemed the secret vindictiveness of the morbidly sensitive Spaniard. But the good sailor, himself of a quite contrary disposition, refrained, on his part, alike from the appearance as from the feeling of resentment, and if silent, was only so from contagion.

Presently the Spaniard, assisted by his servant somewhat discourteously crossed over from his guest; a procedure which, sensibly enough, might have been allowed to pass for idle caprice of ill-humor, had not master and man, lingering round the corner of the elevated skylight, begun whispering together in low voices. This was unpleasant. And more: the moody air of the Spaniard, which at times had not been without a sort of valetudinarian stateliness, now seemed anything

but dignified; while the menial familiarity of the servant lost its original charm of simple-hearted attachment.

In his embarrassment, the visitor turned his face to the other side of the ship. By so doing, his glance accidentally fell on a young Spanish sailor, a coil of rope in his hand, just stepped from the deck to the first round of the mizzen-rigging. Perhaps the man would not have been particularly noticed, were it not that, during his ascent to one of the yards, he, with a sort of covert intentness, kept his eye fixed on Captain Delano, from whom, presently, it passed, as if by a natural sequence, to the two whisperers.

His own attention thus redirected to that quarter, Captain Delano gave a slight start. From something in Don Benito's manner just then, it seemed as if the visitor had, at least partly, been the subject of the withdrawn consultation going on—a conjecture as little agreeable to the guest as it was little flattering to the host.

The singular alternations of courtesy and ill-breeding in the Spanish captain were unaccountable, except on one of two suppositions—innocent lunacy, or wicked imposture.

But the first idea, though it might naturally have occurred to an indifferent observer, and, in some respects, had not hitherto been wholly a stranger to Captain Delano's mind, yet, now that, in an incipient way, he began to regard the stranger's conduct something in the light of an intentional affront, of course the idea of lunacy was virtually vacated. But if not a lunatic, what then? Under the circumstances, would a gentleman, nay, any honest boor, act the part now acted by his host? The man was an impostor. Some low-born adventurer, masquerading as an oceanic grandee; yet so ignorant of the first requisites of mere gentlemanhood as to be betrayed into the present remarkable indecorum. That strange ceremoniousness, too, at other times evinced, seemed not uncharacteristic of one playing a part above his real level. Benito Cereno—Don Benito Cereno—a sounding name. One, too, at that period, not unknown, in the surname, to supercargoes and sea captains trading along the Spanish Main, as belonging to one of the most enterprising and extensive mercantile families in all those provinces; several members of it having titles; a sort of Castilian Rothschild, with a noble brother, or cousin, in every great trading town of South America. The alleged Don Benito was

in early manhood, about twenty-nine or thirty. To assume a sort of roving cadetship in the maritime affairs of such a house, what more likely scheme for a young knave of talent and spirit?

5 But the Spaniard was a pale invalid. Never mind. For even to the degree of simulating mortal disease, the craft of some tricksters had been known to attain. To think that, under the aspect of infantile weakness, the most savage en-
10 ergies might be couched—those velvets of the Spaniard but the velvet paw to his fangs.

From no train of thought did these fancies come; not from within, but from without, suddenly, too, and in one throng, like hoar frost, yet as soon to vanish as the mild sun of Captain Delano's good-nature regained its meridian.

Glancing over once again towards his host—whose side-face, revealed above the skylight, was now turned toward him—he was struck by the profile, whose clearness of cut was refined by the thinness incident to ill-health, as well as ennobled about the chin by the beard. Away with suspicion. He was a true off-shoot of a true hidalgo Cereno.

25 Relieved by these and other better thoughts, the visitor, lightly humming a tune, now began indifferently pacing the poop, so as not to betray to Don Benito that he had at all mistrusted incivility, much less duplicity; for such mistrust would yet be proved illusory, and by the event; though, for the present, the circumstance which
30 had provoked that distrust remained unexplained. But when that little mystery should have been cleared up, Captain Delano thought he might extremely regret it, did he allow Don Benito to become aware that he had indulged in ungenerous surmises. In short, to the Spaniard's black-letter text, it was best, for a while, to leave open margin.

40 Presently, his pale face twitching and overcast, the Spaniard, still supported by his attendant, moved over towards his guest, when, with even more than his usual embarrassment, and a strange sort of intriguing intonation in his husky whisper, the following conversation began:—

“Señor, may I ask how long you have lain at this isle?”

“Oh, but a day or two, Don Benito.”

“And from what port are you last?”

50 “Canton.”

“And there, Señor, you exchanged your seal skins for teas and silks, I think you said?”

"Yes Silks, mostly."

"And the balance you took in specie, perhaps?"

Captain Delano, fidgeting a little, answered—

"Yes; some silver, not a very great deal, though."

"Ah—well. May I ask how many men have you, Señor?"

Captain Delano slightly started, but answered—

"About five-and-twenty, all told."

"And at present, Señor, all on board, I suppose?"

"All on board, Don Benito," replied the Captain, now with satisfaction.

"And will be to-night, Señor?"

At this last question, following so many pertinacious ones, for the soul of him Captain Delano could not but look very earnestly at the questioner, who, instead of meeting the glance, with every token of craven discomposure dropped his eyes to the deck; presenting an unworthy contrast to his servant, who, just then, was kneeling at his feet, adjusting a loose shoe-buckle; his disengaged face meantime, with humble curiosity, turned openly up into his master's downcast one.

The Spaniard, still with a guilty shuffle, repeated his question:

"And—and will be to-night, Señor?"

"Yes, for aught I know," returned Captain Delano—"but nay," rallying himself into fearless truth, "some of them talked of going off on another fishing party about midnight."

"Your ships generally go—go more or less armed, I believe, Señor?"

"Oh, a six-pounder or two, in case of emergency," was the intrepidly indifferent reply, "with a small stock of muskets, sealing-spears, and cutlasses, you know."

As he thus responded, Captain Delano again glanced at Don Benito, but the latter's eyes were averted; while abruptly and awkwardly shifting the subject, he made some peevish allusion to the calm, and then, without apology, once more, with his attendant, withdrew to the opposite bulwarks, where the whispering was resumed.

At this moment, and ere Captain Delano could cast a cool thought upon what had just passed, the young Spanish sailor, before mentioned, was seen descending from the rigging. In act of stooping over to spring inboard to the deck, his vol-

uminous, unconfined frock, or shirt, of coarse woolen, much spotted with tar, opened out far down the chest, revealing a soiled under garment of what seemed the finest linen, edged, about the neck, with a narrow blue ribbon, sadly faded and worn. At this moment the young sailor's eye was again fixed on the whisperers, and Captain Delano thought he observed a lurking significance in it, as if silent signs, of some Freemason sort, had that instant been interchanged.

This once more impelled his own glance in the direction of Don Benito, and, as before, he could not but infer that himself formed the subject of the conference. He paused. The sound of the hatchet-polishing fell on his ears. He cast another swift side-look at the two. They had the air of conspirators. In connection with the late questionings, and the incident of the young sailor, these things now begat such return of involuntary suspicion, that the singular guilelessness of the American could not endure it. Plucking up a gay and humorous expression, he crossed over to the two rapidly, saying:—"Ha, Don Benito, your black here seems high in your trust; a sort of privy-counsellor, in fact."

Upon this, the servant looked up with a good-natured grin, but the master started as from a venomous bite. It was a moment or two before the Spaniard sufficiently recovered himself to reply; which he did, at last, with cold constraint:—"Yes, Señor, I have trust in Babo."

Here Babo, changing his previous grin of mere animal humor into an intelligent smile, not ungratefully eyed his master.

Finding that the Spaniard now stood silent and reserved, as if involuntarily, or purposely giving hint that his guest's proximity was inconvenient just then, Captain Delano, unwilling to appear uncivil even to incivility itself, made some trivial remark and moved off; again and again turning over in his mind the mysterious demeanor of Don Benito Cereno.

He had descended from the poop, and, wrapped in thought, was passing near a dark hatchway, leading down into the steerage, when, perceiving motion there, he looked to see what moved. The same instant there was a sparkle in the shadowy hatchway, and he saw one of the Spanish sailors, prowling there, hurriedly placing his hand in the bosom of his frock, as if hiding something. Before the man could have been certain who it was that was passing, he

slunk below out of sight. But enough was seen of him to make it sure that he was the same young sailor before noticed in the rigging.

What was that which so sparkled? thought Captain Delano. It was no lamp—no match—no live coal. Could it have been a jewel? But how come sailors with jewels?—or with silk-trimmed under-shirts either? Has he been robbing the trunks of the dead cabin-passengers? But if so, he would hardly wear one of the stolen articles on board ship here. Ah, ah—if, now, that was, indeed, a secret sign I saw passing between this suspicious fellow and his captain awhile since; if I could only be certain that, in my uneasiness, my senses did not deceive me, then—

Here, passing from one suspicious thing to another, his mind revolved the strange questions put to him concerning his ship.

By a curious coincidence, as each point was recalled, the black wizards of Ashantee would strike up with their hatchets, as in ominous comment on the white stranger's thoughts. Pressed by such enigmas and portents, it would have been almost against nature, had not, even into the least distrustful heart, some ugly misgivings obtruded.

Observing the ship now helplessly fallen into a current, with enchanted sails, drifting with increased rapidity seaward; and noting that, from a lately intercepted projection of the land, the sealer was hidden, the stout mariner began to quake at thoughts which he barely durst confess to himself. Above all, he began to feel a ghostly dread of Don Benito. And yet when he roused himself, dilated his chest, felt himself strong on his legs, and coolly considered it—what did all these phantoms amount to?

Had the Spaniard any sinister scheme, it must have reference not so much to him (Captain Delano) as to his ship (the Bachelor's Delight). Hence the present drifting away of the one ship from the other, instead of favoring any such possible scheme, was, for the time at least, opposed to it. Clearly any suspicion, combining such contradictions, must need be delusive. Beside, was it not absurd to think of a vessel in distress—a vessel by sickness almost dismantled of her crew—a vessel whose inmates were parched for water—was it not a thousand times absurd that such a craft should, at present, be of a piratical character; or her commander, either for himself or those under him, cherish any desire but for

speedy relief and refreshment? But then, might not general distress, and thirst in particular, be affected? And might not that same undiminished Spanish crew, alleged to have perished off to a remnant, be at that very moment lurking in the hold? On heart-broken pretence of entreating a cup of cold water, fiends in human form had got into lonely dwellings, nor retired until a dark deed had been done. And among the Malay pirates, it was no unusual thing to lure ships after them into their treacherous harbors, or entice boarders from a declared enemy at sea, by the spectacle of thinly manned or vacant decks, beneath which prowled a hundred spears with yellow arms ready to upthrust them through the mats. Not that Captain Delano had entirely credited such things. He had heard of them—and now, as stories, they recurred. The present destination of the ship was the anchorage. There she would be near his own vessel. Upon gaining that vicinity, might not the San Dominick, like a slumbering volcano, suddenly let loose energies now hid?

He recalled the Spaniard's manner while telling his story. There was a gloomy hesitancy and subterfuge about it. It was just the manner of one making up his tale for evil purposes, as he goes. But if that story was not true, what was the truth? That the ship had unlawfully come into the Spaniard's possession? But in many of its details, especially in reference to the more calamitous parts, such as the fatalities among the seamen, the consequent prolonged beating about, the past sufferings from obstinate calms, and still continued suffering from thirst; in all these points, as well as others, Don Benito's story had corroborated not only the wailing ejaculations of the indiscriminate multitude, white and black, but likewise—what seemed impossible to counterfeited—by the very expression and play of every human feature, which Captain Delano saw. If Don Benito's story was, throughout, an invention, then every soul on board, down to the youngest negress, was his carefully drilled recruit in the plot: an incredible inference. And yet, if there was ground for mistrusting his veracity, that inference was a legitimate one.

But those questions of the Spaniard. There, indeed, one might pause. Did they not seem put with much the same object with which the burglar or assassin, by day-time, reconnoitres the walls of a house? But, with ill purposes, to solicit

such information openly of the chief person endangered, and so, in effect, setting him on his guard, how unlikely a procedure was that? Absurd, then, to suppose that those questions had been prompted by evil designs. Thus, the same conduct, which, in this instance, had raised the alarm, served to dispel it. In short, scarce any suspicion or uneasiness, however apparently reasonable at the time, which was not now, with equal apparent reason, dismissed.

At last, he began to laugh at his former forebodings; and laugh at the strange ship for, in its aspect somehow siding with them, as it were; and laugh, too, at the odd-looking blacks, particularly those old scissors-grinders, the Ashantees; and those bed-ridden old knitting women, the oakum-pickers; and almost at the dark Spaniard himself, the central hobgoblin of all.

For the rest, whatever in a serious way seemed enigmatical, was now good-naturedly explained away by the thought that, for the most part the poor invalid scarcely knew what he was about; either sulking in black vapors, or putting idle questions without sense or object. Evidently, for the present, the man was not fit to be intrusted with the ship. On some benevolent plea withdrawing the command from him, Captain Delano would yet have to send her to Conception in charge of his second mate, a worthy person and good navigator—a plan not more convenient for the San Dominick than for Don Benito; for, relieved from all anxiety, keeping wholly to his cabin, the sick man, under the good nursing of his servant, would probably, by the end of the passage, be in a measure restored to health, and with that he should also be restored to authority.

Such were the American's thoughts. They were tranquilizing. There was a difference between the idea of Don Benito's darkly pre-ordaining Captain Delano's fate, and Captain Delano's lightly arranging Don Benito's. Nevertheless, it was not without something of relief that the good seaman presently perceived his whale-boat in the distance. Its absence had been prolonged by unexpected detention at the sealer's side, as well as its returning trip lengthened by the continual recession of the goal.

The advancing speck was observed by the blacks. Their shouts attracted the attention of Don Benito, who, with a return of courtesy, approaching Captain Delano, expressed satisfaction at the coming of some supplies, slight and temporary as they must necessarily prove.

Captain Delano responded, but while doing so, his attention was drawn to something passing on the deck below among the crowd climbing the landward bulwarks, anxiously watching the coming boat, two blacks, to all appearances accidentally incommoded by one of the sailors, violently pushed him aside, which the sailor somehow resenting, they dashed him to the deck, despite the earnest cries of the oakum-pickers.

"Don Benito," said Captain Delano quickly, "do you see what is going on there? Look!"

But, seized by his cough, the Spaniard staggered, with both hands to his face, on the point of falling. Captain Delano would have supported him, but the servant was more alert, who, with one hand sustaining his master, with the other applied the cordial. Don Benito restored, the black withdrew his support, slipping aside a little, but dutifully remaining within call of a whisper. Such discretion was here evinced as quite wiped away, in the visitor's eyes, any blemish of impropriety which might have attached to the attendant, from the indecorous conferences before mentioned; showing, too, that if the servant were to blame, it might be more the master's fault than his own, since, when left to himself, he could conduct thus well.

His glance called away from the spectacle of disorder to the more pleasing one before him, Captain Delano could not avoid again congratulating his host upon possessing such a servant, who, though perhaps a little too forward now and then, must upon the whole be invaluable to one in the invalid's situation.

"Tell me, Don Benito," he added, with a smile—"I should like to have your man here, myself—what will you take for him? Would fifty doubloons be any object?"

"Master wouldn't part with Babo for a thousand doubloons," murmured the black, overhearing the offer, and taking it in earnest, and, with the strange vanity of a faithful slave, appreciated by his master, scorning to hear so paltry a valuation put upon him by a stranger. But Don Benito, apparently hardly yet completely restored, and again interrupted by his cough, made but some broken reply.

Soon his physical distress became so great, affecting his mind, too, apparently, that, as if to screen the sad spectacle, the servant gently conducted his master below.

Left to himself, the American, to while away

the time till his boat should arrive, would have pleasantly accosted some one of the few Spanish seamen he saw; but recalling something that Don Benito had said touching their ill conduct, he refrained, as a ship-master indisposed to countenance cowardice or unfaithfulness in seamen.

While, with these thoughts, standing with eye directed forwards towards that handful of sailors, suddenly he thought that one or two of them returned the glance and with a sort of meaning. He rubbed his eyes, and looked again; but again seemed to see the same thing. Under a new form, but more obscure than any previous one, the old suspicions recurred, but, in the absence of Don Benito, with less of panic than before. Despite the bad account given of the sailors, Captain Delano resolved forthwith to accost one of them. Descending the poop, he made his way through the blacks, his movement drawing a queer cry from the oakum-pickers, prompted by whom, the negroes, twitching each other aside, divided before him; but, as if curious to see what was the object of this deliberate visit to their Ghetto, closing in behind, in tolerable order, followed the white stranger up. His progress thus proclaimed as by mounted kings-at-arms, and escorted as by a Caffre guard of honor, Captain Delano, assuming a good-humored, off-hand air, continued to advance; now and then saying a blithe word to the negroes, and his eye curiously surveying the white faces, here and there sparsely mixed in with the blacks, like stray white pawns venturously involved in the ranks of the chessmen opposed.

While thinking which of them to select for his purpose, he chanced to observe a sailor seated on the deck engaged in tarring the strap of a large block, a circle of blacks squatted round him inquisitively eyeing the process.

The mean employment of the man was in contrast with something superior in his figure. His hand, black with continually thrusting it into the tar-pot held for him by a negro, seemed not naturally allied to his face, a face which would have been a very fine one but for its haggardness. Whether this haggardness had ought to do with criminality, could not be determined; since, as intense heat and cold, though unlike, produce like sensations, so innocence and guilt, when, through casual association with mental pain, stamping any visible impress, use one seal—a hacked one.

Not again that this reflection occurred to Cap-

tain Delano at the time, charitable man as he was. Rather another idea. Because observing so singular a haggardness to be combined with a dark eye, averted as in trouble and shame, and then, again recalling Don Benito's confessed ill opinion of his crew, insensibly he was operated upon by certain general notions which, while disconnecting pain and abashment from virtue, as invariably link them with vice.

If, indeed, there be any wickedness on board this ship, thought Captain Delano, be sure that man there has fouled his hand in it, even as now he fouls it in the pitch. I don't like to accost him. I will speak to this other, this old Jack here on the windlass.

He advanced to an old Barcelona tar, in ragged red breeches and dirty night-cap, cheeks trenched and bronzed, whiskers dense as thorn hedges. Seated between two sleepy-looking Africans, this mariner, like his younger shipmate, was employed upon some rigging—splicing a cable—the sleepy-looking blacks performing the inferior function of holding the outer parts of the ropes for him.

Upon Captain Delano's approach, the man at once hung his head below its previous level; the one necessary for business. It appeared as if he desired to be thought absorbed, with more than common fidelity, in his task. Being addressed, he glanced up, but with what seemed a furtive, diffident air, which sat strangely enough on his weather-beaten visage, much as if a grizzly bear, instead of growling and biting, should simper and cast sheep's eyes. He was asked several questions concerning the voyage—questions purposely referring to several particulars in Don Benito's narrative, not previously corroborated by those impulsive cries greeting the visitor on first coming on board. The questions were briefly answered, confirming all that remained to be confirmed of the story. The negroes about the windlass joined in with the old sailor; but, as they became talkative, he by degrees became mute, and at length quite glum, seemed morosely unwilling to answer more questions, and yet, all the while, this ursine air was somehow mixed with his sheepish one.

Despairing of getting into unembarrassed talk with such a centaur, Captain Delano, after glancing round for more promising countenance, but seeing none, spoke pleasantly to the blacks to make way for him; and so, amid various grins and grimaces, returned to the poop, feeling a little

strange at first, he could hardly tell why, but upon the whole with regained confidence in Benito Cereno.

How plainly, thought he, did that old whickerando yonder betray a consciousness of ill desert. No doubt, when he saw me coming, he dreaded lest I, apprised by his Captain of the crew's general misbehavior, came with sharp words for him, and so down with his head. And yet—and yet, now that I think of it, that very old fellow, if I err not, was one of those who seemed so earnestly eying me here awhile since. Ah, these currents spin one's head round almost as much as they do the ship. Ha, there now's a pleasant sort of sunny sight; quite sociable, too.

His attention had been drawn to a slumbering negress, partly disclosed through the lace-work of some rigging, lying, with youthful limbs carelessly disposed, under the lee of the bulwarks, like a doe in the shade of a woodland rock. Sprawling at her lapped breasts, was her wide-awake fawn, stark naked, its black little body half lifted from the deck, crosswise with its dam's; its hands, like two paws, clambering upon her; its mouth and nose ineffectually rooting to get at the mark; and meantime giving a vexatious half-grunt, blending with the composed snore of the negress.

The uncommon vigor of the child at length roused the mother. She started up, at a distance facing Captain Delano. But as if not at all concerned at the attitude in which she had been caught, delightedly she caught the child up, with maternal transports, covering it with kisses.

There's naked nature, now; pure tenderness and love, thought Captain Delano, well pleased.

This incident prompted him to remark the other negresses more particularly than before. He was gratified with their manners; like most uncivilized women, they seemed at once tender of heart and tough of constitution; equally ready to die for their infants or fight for them. Unsophisticated as leopardesses; loving as doves. Ah! thought Captain Delano, these, perhaps, are some of the very women whom Ledyard saw in Africa, and gave such a noble account of.

These natural sights somehow insensibly deepened his confidence and ease. At last he looked to see how his boat was getting on; but it was still pretty remote. He turned to see if Don Benito had returned; but he had not.

To change the scene, as well as to please him-

self with a leisurely observation of the coming boat, stepping over into the mizzen-chains, he clambered his way into the starboard quarter-gallery—one of those abandoned Venetian-looking water-balconies previously mentioned—retreats cut off from the deck. As his foot pressed the half-damp, half-dry sea-mosses matting the place, and a chance phantom cats-paw—an islet of breeze, unheralded, unfollowed—as this ghostly cats-paw came fanning his cheek; as his glance fell upon the row of small, round dead-lights—all closed like coppered eyes of the confined—and the state-cabin door, once connecting with the gallery, even as the dead-lights had once looked out upon it, but now calked fast like a sarcophagus lid; and to a purple-black, tarred-over panel, threshold, and post; and he bethought him of the time, when that state-cabin and this state-balcony had heard the voices of the Spanish king's officers, and the forms of the Lima viceroy's daughters had perhaps leaned where he stood—as these and other images flitted through his mind, as the cats-paw through the calm, gradually he felt rising a dreamy inquietude, like that of one who alone on the prairie feels unrest from the repose of the noon.

He leaned against the carved balustrade, again looking off toward his boat; but found his eye falling upon the ribbon grass, trailing along the ship's water-line, straight as a border of green box; and parterres of sea-weed, broad ovals and crescents, floating nigh and far, with what seemed long formal alleys between, crossing the terraces of swells, and sweeping round as if leading to the grottoes below. And overhanging all was the balustrade by his arm, which, partly stained with pitch and partly embossed with moss, seemed the charred ruin of some summer-house in a grand garden long running to waste.

Trying to break one charm, he was but becharmed anew. Though upon the wide sea, he seemed in some far inland country; prisoner in some deserted chateau, left to stare at empty grounds, and peer out at vague roads, where never wagon or wayfarer passed.

But these enchantments were a little disenchanted as his eye fell on the corroded main-chains. Of an ancient style, massy and rusty in link, shackle and bolt, they seemed even more fit for the ship's present business than the one for which she had been built.

Presently he thought something moved nigh

the chains. He rubbed his eyes, and looked hard. Groves of rigging were about the chains; and there, peering from behind a great stay, like an Indian from behind a hemlock, a Spanish sailor, a marlingspike in his hand, was seen, who made what seemed an imperfect gesture towards the balcony, but immediately, as if alarmed by some advancing step along the deck within, vanished into the recesses of the hempen forest, like a poacher.

What meant this? Something the man had sought to communicate, unbeknown to any one, even to his captain. Did the secret involve aught unfavourable to his captain? Were those previous misgivings of Captain Delano's about to be verified? Or, in his haunted mood at the moment, had some random, unintentional motion of the man, while busy with the stay, as if repairing it, been mistaken for a significant beckoning?

Not unbewildered, again he gazed off for his boat. But it was temporarily hidden by a rocky spur of the isle. As with some eagerness he bent forward, watching for the first shooting view of its beak, the balustrade gave way before him like charcoal. Had he not clutched an outreaching rope he would have fallen into the sea. The crash, though feeble, and the fall, though hollow, of the rotten fragments, must have been overheard. He glanced up. With sober curiosity peering down upon him was one of the old oakum-pickers, slipped from his perch to an outside boom; while below the old negro, and, invisible to him, reconnoitering from a port-hole like a fox from the mouth of its den, crouched the Spanish sailor again. From something suddenly suggested by the man's air, the mad idea now darted into Captain Delano's mind, that Don Benito's plea of indisposition, in withdrawing below, was but a pretense: that he was engaged there maturing some plot, of which the sailor, by some means gaining an inkling, had a mind to warn the stranger against; incited, it may be, by gratitude for a kind word on first boarding the ship. Was it from foreseeing some possible interference like this, that Don Benito had, beforehand, given such a bad character of his sailors, while praising the negroes; though, indeed, the former seemed as docile as the latter the contrary? The whites, too, by nature, were the shrewder race. A man with some evil design, would he not be likely to speak well of that

stupidity which was blind to his depravity, and malign that intelligence from which it might not be hidden? Not unlikely, perhaps. But if the whites had dark secrets concerning Don Benito, could then Don Benito be any way in complicity with the blacks? But they were too stupid. Besides, who ever heard of a white so far a renegade as to apostatize from his very species almost, by leaguering in against it with negroes? These difficulties recalled former ones. Lost in their mazes, Captain Delano, who had now regained the deck, was uneasily advancing along it, when he observed a new face; an aged sailor seated cross-legged near the main hatchway. His skin was shrunk up with wrinkles like a pelican's empty pouch; his hair frosted; his countenance grave and composed. His hands were full of ropes, which he was working into a large knot. Some blacks were about him obligingly dipping the strands for him, here and there, as the exigencies of the operation demanded.

Captain Delano crossed over to him, and stood in silence surveying the knot; his mind, by a not uncongenial transition, passing from its own entanglements to those of the hemp. For intricacy such a knot he had never seen in an American ship, or indeed any other. The old man looked like an Egyptian priest, making Gordian knots for the temple of Ammon. The knot seemed a combination of double-bowline-knot, treble-crown-knot, back-handed-well-knot, knot-in-and-out-knot, and jamming-knot.

At last, puzzled to comprehend the meaning of such a knot, Captain Delano addressed the knoter:—

"What are you knotting there, my man?"

"The knot," was the brief reply, without looking up.

"So it seems; but what is it for?"

"For some one else to undo," muttered back the old man, plying his fingers harder than ever, the knot being now nearly completed.

While Captain Delano stood watching him, suddenly the old man threw the knot towards him, saying in broken English,—the first heard in the ship,—something to this effect: "Undo it, cut it, quick." It was said lowly, but with such condensation of rapidity, that the long, slow words in Spanish, which had preceded and followed, almost operated as covers to the brief English between.

For a moment, knot in hand, and knot in

head, Captain Delano stood mute; while, without further heeding him, the old man was now intent upon other ropes. Presently there was a slight stir behind Captain Delano. Turning, he saw the chained negro, Atufal, standing quietly there. The next moment the old sailor rose, muttering, and, followed by his subordinate negroes, removed to the forward part of the ship, where in the crowd he disappeared.

An elderly negro, in a clout like an infant's, and with a pepper and salt head, and a kind of attorney air, now approached Captain Delano. In tolerable Spanish, and with a good-natured, knowing wink, he informed him that the old knotter was simple-witted, but harmless, often playing his old tricks. The negro concluded by begging the knot, for of course the stranger would not care to be troubled with it. Unconsciously, it was handed to him. With a sort of *congé*, the negro received it, and, turning his back, ferreted into it like a detective custom-house officer after smuggled laces. Soon, with some African word, equivalent to *pshaw*, he tossed the knot overboard.

All this is very queer now, thought Captain Delano, with a qualmish sort of emotion; but, as one feeling incipient sea-sickness, he strove, by ignoring the symptoms, to get rid of the malady. Once more he looked off for his boat. To his delight, it was now again in view, leaving the rocky spur astern.

The sensation here experienced, after at first relieving his uneasiness, with unforeseen efficacy soon began to remove it. The less distant sight of that well-known boat—showing it, not as before, half blended with the haze, but with outline defined, so that its individuality, like a man's, was manifest; that boat, *Rover* by name, which, though now in strange seas, had often pressed the beach of Captain Delano's home, and, brought to its threshold for repairs, had familiarly lain there, as a Newfoundland dog; the sight of that household boat evoked a thousand trustful associations, which, contrasted with previous suspicions, filled him not only with lightsome confidence, but somehow with half humorous self-reproaches at his former lack of it.

"What, I, Amasa Delano—Jack of the Beach, as they called me when a lad—I, Amasa; the same that, duck-satchel in hand, used to paddle along the water-side to the school-house made from the

old hulk—I, little Jack of the Beach, that used to go berrying with cousin Nat and the rest, I to be murdered here at the ends of the earth, on board a haunted pirate-ship by a horrible Spaniard? Too nonsensical to think of! Who would murder Amasa Delano? His conscience is clean. There is some one above. Fie, fie, Jack of the Beach! you are a child indeed; a child of the second childhood, old boy; you are beginning to dote and drule, I'm afraid."

Light of heart and foot, he stepped aft, and there was met by Don Benito's servant, who, with a pleasing expression, responsive to his own present feelings, informed him that his master had recovered from the effects of his coughing fit, and had just ordered him to go present his compliments to his good guest, Don Amasa, and say that he (Don Benito) would soon have the happiness to rejoin him.

There now, do you mark that? again thought Captain Delano, walking the poop. What a donkey I was. This kind gentleman who here sends me his kind compliments, he, but ten minutes ago, dark-lantern in hand, was dodging round some old grind-stone in the hold, sharpening a hatchet for me, I thought. Well, well; these long calms have a morbid effect on the mind, I've often heard, though I never believed it before. Ha! glancing towards the boat; there's *Rover*; good dog; a white bone in her mouth. A pretty big bone though, seems to me—What? Yes, she has fallen afoul of the bubbling tide-rip there. It sets her the other way, too, for the time. Patience.

It was now about noon, though, from the grayness of everything, it seemed to be getting towards dusk.

The calm was confirmed. In the far distance, away from the influence of land, the leaden ocean seemed laid out and leaded up, its course finished, soul gone, defunct. But the current from landward, where the ship was, increased; silently sweeping her further and further towards the tranced waters beyond.

Still, from his knowledge of those latitudes, cherishing hopes of a breeze, and a fair and fresh one, at any moment, Captain Delano, despite present prospects, buoyantly counted upon bringing the San Dominick safely to anchor ere night. The distance swept over was nothing; since, with a good wind, ten minutes' sailing would retrace more than sixty minutes' drift-

ing. Meantime, one moment turning to mark "Rover" fighting the tide-rip, and the next to see Don Benito approaching, he continued walking the poop.

Gradually he felt a vexation arising from the delay of his boat; this soon merged into uneasiness; and at last—his eye falling continually, as from a stage-box into the pit, upon the strange crowd before and below him, and, by-and-by, recognizing there the face—now composed to indifference—of the Spanish sailor who had seemed to beckon from the main-chains—something of his old trepidations returned.

Ah, thought he—gravely enough—this is like the ague; because it went off, it follows not that it won't come back.

Though ashamed of the relapse, he could not altogether subdue it; and so, exerting his good-nature to the utmost, insensibly he came to a compromise.

Yes, this is a strange craft; a strange history, too, and strange folks on board. But—nothing more.

By way of keeping his mind out of mischief till the boat should arrive, he tried to occupy it with turning over and over, in a purely speculative sort of way, some lesser peculiarities of the captain and crew. Among others, four curious points recurred:

First, the affair of the Spanish lad assailed with a knife by the slave boy; an act winked at by Don Benito. Second, the tyranny in Don Benito's treatment of Atufal, the black; as if a child should lead a bull of the Nile by the ring in his nose. Third, the trampling of the sailor by the two negroes; a piece of insolence passed over without so much as a reprimand. Fourth, the cringing submission to their master of all the ships' underlings, mostly blacks; as if by the least inadvertence they feared to draw down his despot's displeasure.

Coupling these points, they seemed somewhat contradictory. But what then, thought Captain Delano, glancing towards his now nearing boat—what then? Why, Don Benito is a very capricious commander. But he is not the first of the sort I have seen; though it's true he rather exceeds any other. But as a nation—continued he in his reveries—these Spaniards are all an odd set; the very word Spaniard has a curious, conspirator, Guy-Fawkish twang to it. And yet, I dare say, Spaniards in the main are as good folks

as any in Duxbury, Massachusetts. Ah, good! At last "Rover" has come.

As, with its welcome freight, the boat touched the side, the oakum-pickers, with venerable gestures, sought to restrain the blacks, who, at the sight of three gurnied water-casks in its bottom, and a pile of wilted pumpkins in its bow, hung over the bulwarks in disorderly raptures.

Don Benito, with his servant, now appeared; his coming, perhaps, hastened by hearing the noise. Of him Captain Delano sought permission to serve out the water, so that all might share alike, and none injure themselves by unfair excess. But sensible, and, on Don Benito's account, kind as this offer was, it was received with what seemed impatience, as if aware that he lacked energy as a commander, Don Benito, with the true jealousy of weakness, resented as an affront any interference. So, at least, Captain Delano inferred.

In another moment the casks were being hoisted in, when some of the eager negroes accidentally jostled Captain Delano, where he stood by the gangway; so that, unmindful of Don Benito, yielding to the impulse of the moment, with good-natured authority he bade the blacks stand back; to enforce his words making use of a half-mirthful, half-menacing gesture. Instantly the blacks paused, just where they were, each negro and negress suspended in his or her posture, exactly as the word had found them—for a few seconds continuing so—while, as between the responsive posts of a telegraph, an unknown syllable ran from man to man among the perched oakum-pickers. While the visitor's attention was fixed by this scene, suddenly the hatchet-polishers half rose, and a rapid cry came from Don Benito.

Thinking that at the signal of the Spaniard he was about to be massacred, Captain Delano would have sprung for his boat, but paused, as the oakum-pickers, dropping down into the crowd with earnest exclamations, forced every white and every negro back, at the same moment, with gestures friendly and familiar, almost jocose, bidding him, in substance, not to be a fool. Simultaneously the hatchet-polishers resumed their seats, quietly as so many tailors, and at once, as if nothing had happened, the work of hoisting in the casks was resumed, whites and blacks singing at the tackle.

Captain Delano glanced toward Don Benito.

As he saw his meagre form in the act of recovering itself from reclining in the servant's arms, into which the agitated invalid had fallen, he could not but marvel at the panic by which himself had been surprised on the darting supposition that such a commander, who, upon a legitimate occasion, so trivial, too, as it now appeared, could lose all self-command, was, with energetic iniquity, going to bring about his murder.

The casks being on deck, Captain Delano was handed a number of jars and cups by one of the steward's aids, who, in the name of his captain, entreated him to do as he had proposed—dole out the water. He complied, with republican impartiality as to this republican element, which always seeks one level, serving the oldest white no better than the youngest black; excepting, indeed, poor Don Benito, whose condition, if not rank, demanded an extra allowance. To him, in the first place, Captain Delano presented a fair pitcher of the fluid; but, thirsting as he was for fresh water, the Spaniard quaffed not a drop until after several grave bows and salutes. A reciprocation of courtesies which the sight-loving Africans hailed with clapping of hands.

Two of the less wilted pumpkins being reserved for the cabin table, the residue were minced up on the spot for the general regalement. But the soft bread, sugar, and bottled cider, Captain Delano would have given the whites alone, and in chief Don Benito; but the latter objected; which disinterestedness not a little pleased the American; and so mouthfuls all around were given alike to whites and blacks; excepting one bottle of cider, which Babo insisted upon setting aside for his master.

Here it may be observed that as, on the first visit of the boat, the American had not permitted his men to board the ship, neither did he now; being unwilling to add to the confusion of the decks.

Not uninfluenced by the peculiar good-humor at present prevailing, and for the time oblivious of any but benevolent thoughts, Captain Delano, who, from recent indications, counted upon a breeze within an hour or two at furthest, dispatched the boat back to the sealer, with orders for all the hands that could be spared immediately to set about rafting casks to the watering-place and filling them. Likewise he bade word be carried to his chief officer, that if, against

present expectation, the ship was not brought to anchor by sunset, he need be under no concern; for as there was to be a full moon that night, he (Captain Delano) would remain on board ready to play the pilot, come the wind soon or late.

As the two captains stood together, observing the departing boat—the servant, as it happened, having just spied a spot on his master's velvet sleeve, and silently engaged rubbing it out—the American expressed his regrets that the San Dominick had no boats; none, at least, but the unseaworthy old hulk of the long-boat, which, warped as a camel's skeleton in the desert, and almost as bleached, lay pot-wise inverted amidships, one side a little tipped, furnishing a subterraneous sort of den for family groups of the blacks, mostly women and small children; who, squatting on old mats below, or perched above in the dark dome, on the elevated seats, were descried, some distance within, like a social circle of bats, sheltering in some friendly cave; at intervals, ebon flights of naked boys and girls, three or four years old, darting in and out of the den's mouth.

"Had you three or four boats now, Don Benito," said Captain Delano, "I think that, by tugging at the oars, your negroes here might help along matters some. Did you sail from port without boats, Don Benito?"

"They were stove in the gales, Señor."

"That was bad. Many men, too, you lost then. Boats and men. Those must have been hard gales, Don Benito."

"Past all speech," cringed the Spaniard.

"Tell me, Don Benito," continued his companion with increased interest, "tell me, were these gales immediately off the pitch of Cape Horn?"

"Cape Horn?—who spoke of Cape Horn?"

"Yourself did, when giving me an account of your voyage," answered Captain Delano, with almost equal astonishment at this eating of his own words, even as he ever seemed eating his own heart, on the part of the Spaniard. "You yourself, Don Benito, spoke of Cape Horn," he emphatically repeated.

The Spaniard turned, in a sort of stooping posture, pausing an instant, as one about to make a plunging exchange of elements, as from air to water.

At this moment a messenger-boy, a white,

hurried by, in the regular performance of his function carrying the last expired half-hour forward to the forecabin, from the cabin time-piece, to have it struck at the ship's large bell.

"Master," said the servant, discontinuing his work on the coat sleeve, and addressing the rapt Spaniard with a sort of timid apprehensiveness, as one charged with a duty, the discharge of which, it was foreseen, would prove irksome to the very person who had imposed it, and for whose benefit it was intended, "master told me never mind where he was, or how engaged, always to remind him, to a minute, when shaving-time comes. Miguel has gone to strike the half-hour afternoon. It is *now*, master. Will master go into the cuddy?"

"Ah—yes," answered the Spaniard, starting, as from dreams into realities, then turning upon Captain Delano, he said that ere long he would resume the conversation.

"Then if master means to talk more to Don Amasa," said the servant, "why not let Don Amasa sit by master in the cuddy, and master can talk, and Don Amasa can listen, while Babo here lathers and strops."

"Yes," said Captain Delano, not displeased with this sociable plan, "yes, Don Benito, unless you had rather not, I will go with you."

"Be it so, Señor."

As the three passed aft, the American could not but think it another strange instance of his host's capriciousness, this being shaved with such uncommon punctuality in the middle of the day. But he deemed it more than likely that the servant's anxious fidelity had something to do with the matter; inasmuch as the timely interruption served to rally his master from the mood which had evidently been coming upon him.

The place called the cuddy was a light deck-cabin formed by the poop, a sort of attic to the large cabin below. Part of it had formerly been the quarters of the officers; but since their death all the partitionings had been thrown down, and the whole interior converted into one spacious and airy marine hall; for absence of fine furniture and picturesque disarray of odd appurtenances, somewhat answering to the wide, cluttered hall of some eccentric bachelor-squire in the country, who hangs his shooting-jacket and tobacco-pouch on deer antlers, and keeps his fishing-rod, tongs, and walking-stick in the same corner.

The similitude was heightened, if not originally suggested, by glimpses of the surrounding sea, since, in one aspect, the country and the ocean seem cousins-german.

The floor of the cuddy was matted. Overhead, four or five old muskets were stuck into horizontal holes along the beams. On one side was a claw-footed old table lashed to the deck; a thumbed missal on it, and over it a small, meagre crucifix attached to the bulk-head. Under the table lay a dented cutlass or two, with a hacked harpoon, among some melancholy old rigging, like a heap of poor friars' girdles. There were also two long, sharp-ribbed settees of Malacca cane, black with age, and uncomfortable to look at as inquisitors' racks, with a large, misshapen arm-chair, which, furnished with a rude barber's crotch at the back, working with a screw, seemed some grotesque engine of torment. A flag locker was in one corner, exposing various colored bunting, some rolled up, others half unrolled, still others tumbled. Opposite was a cumbrous washstand, of black mahogany, all of one block, with a pedestal, like a font, and over it a railed shelf, containing combs, brushes, and other implements of the toilet. A torn hammock of stained grass swung near; the sheets tossed, and the pillow wrinkled up like a brow, as if whoever slept here slept but illy, with alternate visitations of sad thoughts and bad dreams.

The further extremity of the cuddy, overhanging the ship's stern, was pierced with three openings, windows or port-holes, according as men or cannon might peer, socially or unsocially, out of them. At present neither men nor cannon were seen, though huge ring-bolts and other rusty iron fixtures of the woodwork hinted of twenty-four-pounders.

Glancing towards the hammock as he entered, Captain Delano said, "You sleep here, Don Benito?"

"Yes, Señor, since we got into mild weather."

"This seems a sort of dormitory, sitting-room, sail-loft, chapel, armory, and private closet together, Don Benito," added Captain Delano, looking around.

"Yes, Señor; events have not been favorable to much order in my arrangements."

Here the servant, napkin on arm, made a motion as if waiting his master's good pleasure. Don Benito signified his readiness, when, seating him in the Malacca arm-chair, and for the guest's

convenience drawing opposite one of the settees, the servant commenced operations by throwing back his master's collar and loosening his cravat.

There is something in the negro which, in a peculiar way, fits him for avocations about one's person. Most negroes are natural valets and hairdressers; taking to the comb and brush congenially as to the castanets, and flourishing them apparently with almost equal satisfaction. There is, too, a smooth tact about them in this employment, with a marvelous, noiseless, gliding briskness, not ungraceful in its way, singularly pleasing to behold, and still more so to be the manipulated subject of. And above all is the great gift of good-humor. Not the mere grin or laugh is here meant. Those were unsuitable. But a certain easy cheerfulness, harmonious in every glance and gesture; as though God had set the whole negro to some pleasant tune.

When to all this is added the docility arising from the unaspiring contentment of a limited mind, and that susceptibility of blind attachment sometimes inhering in indisputable inferiors, one readily perceives why those hypochondriacs, Johnson and Byron—it may be something like the hypochondriac, Benito Cereno—took to their hearts, almost to the exclusion of the entire white race, their serving men, the negroes, Barber and Fletcher. But if there be that in the negro which exempts him from the inflicted sourness of the morbid or cynical mind, how, in his most prepossessing aspects, must he appear to a benevolent one? When at ease with respect to exterior things, Captain Delano's nature was not only benign, but familiarly and humorously so. At home, he had often taken rare satisfaction in sitting in his door, watching some free man of color at his work or play. If on a voyage he chanced to have a black sailor, invariably he was on chatty, and half-gamesome terms with him. In fact, like most men of a good, blithe heart, Captain Delano took to negroes, not philanthropically, but genially, just as other men to Newfoundland dogs.

Hitherto the circumstances in which he found the San Dominick had repressed the tendency. But in the cuddy, relieved from his former uneasiness, and, for various reasons, more sociably inclined than at any previous period of the day, and seeing the colored servant, napkin on arm, so debonair about his master, in a business so

familiar as that of shaving, too, all his old weakness for negroes returned

Among other things, he was amused with an odd instance of the African love of bright colors and fine shows, in the black's informally taking from the flag-locker a great piece of bunting of all hues, and lavishly tucking it under his master's chin for an apron.

The mode of shaving among the Spaniards is a little different from what it is with other nations. They have a basin, specially called a barber's basin, which on side is scooped cut, so as accurately to receive the chin, against which it is closely held in lathering; which is done, not with a brush, but with soap dipped in the water of the basin and rubbed on the face.

In the present instance salt-water was used for lack of better; and the parts lathered were only the upper lip, and low down under the throat, all the rest being cultivated beard.

These preliminaries being somewhat novel to Captain Delano he sat curiously eyeing them, so that no conversation took place, nor, for the present, did Don Benito appear disposed to renew any.

Setting down his basin, the negro searched among the razors, as for the sharpest, and having found it, gave it an additional edge by expertly stropping it on the firm, smooth, oily skin of his open palm; he then made a gesture as if to begin, but midway stood suspended for an instant, one hand elevating the razor, the other professionally dabbling among the bubbling suds on the Spaniard's lank neck. Not unaffected by the close sight of the gleaming steel, Don Benito nervously shuddered; his usual ghastliness was heightened by the lather, which lather, again, was intensified in its hue by the contrasting sootiness of the negro's body. Altogether the scene was somewhat peculiar, at least to Captain Delano, nor, as he saw the two thus postured, could he resist the vagary, that in the black he saw a headsman, and in the white a man at the block. But this was one of those antic conceits, appearing and vanishing in a breath, from which, perhaps, the best regulated mind is not free.

Meantime the agitation of the Spaniard had a little loosened the bunting from around him, so that one broad fold swept curtain-like over the chair-arm to the floor, revealing amid a profusion of armorial bars and ground-colors—

black, blue and yellow—a closed castle in a blood-red field diagonal with a lion rampant in a white.

“The castle and the lion,” exclaimed Captain Delano—“why, Don Benito, this is the flag of Spain you use here. It’s well it’s only I, and not the King, that sees this,” he added with a smile, “but”—turning towards the black,—“it’s all one, I suppose, so the colors be gay;” which playful remark did not fail somewhat to tickle the negro.

“Now, master,” he said, readjusting the flag, and pressing the head gently further back into the crotch of the chair; “now, master,” and the steel glanced nigh the throat.

Again Don Benito faintly shuddered.

“You must not shake so, master. See, Don Amasa, master always shakes when I shave him. And yet master knows I never yet have drawn blood, though it’s true, if master will shake so, I may some of these times. Now, master,” he continued. “And now, Don Amasa, please go on with your talk about the gale, and all that; master can hear, and between times, master can answer.

“Ah, yes, these gales,” said Captain Delano; “but the more I think of your voyage, Don Benito, the more I wonder, not at the gales, terrible as they must have been, but at the disastrous interval following them. For here, by your account, have you been these two months and more getting from Cape Horn to St. Maria, a distance which I myself, with a good wind, have sailed in a few days. True, you had calms, and long ones, but to be becalmed for two months, that is, at least, unusual. Why, Don Benito, had almost any other gentleman told me such a story, I should have been half disposed to a little incredulity.”

Here an involuntary expression came over the Spaniard, similar to that just before on the deck, and whether it was the start he gave, or a sudden gawky roll of the hull in the calm, or a momentary unsteadiness of the servant’s hand, however it was, just then the razor drew blood, spots of which stained the creamy lather under the throat; immediately the black barber drew back his steel, and remaining in his professional attitude, back to Captain Delano, and face to Don Benito, held up the trickling razor, saying, with a sort of half humorous sorrow, “See, master—you shook so—here’s Babo’s first blood.”

No sword drawn before James the First of

England, no assassination in that timid King’s presence, could have produced a more terrified aspect than was now presented by Don Benito.

Poor fellow, thought Captain Delano, so nervous he can’t even bear the sight of barber’s blood; and this unstrung, sick man, is it credible that I should have imagined he meant to spill all my blood, who can’t endure the sight of one little drop of his own? Surely, Amasa Delano, you have been beside yourself this day. Tell it not when you get home, sappy Amasa. Well, well, he looks like a murderer, doesn’t he? More like as if himself were to be done for. Well, well, this day’s experience shall be a good lesson.

Meantime, while these things were running through the honest seaman’s mind, the servant had taken the napkin from his arm, and to Don Benito had said—“But answer Don Amasa, please, master, while I wipe this ugly stuff off the razor, and strop it again.”

As he said the words, his face was turned half round, so as to be alike visible to the Spaniard and the American, and seemed, by its expression, to him, that he was desirous, by getting his master to go on with the conversation, considerably to withdraw his attention from the recent annoying accident. As if glad to snatch the offered relief, Don Benito resumed, rehearsing to Captain Delano, that not only were the calms of unusual duration, but the ship had fallen in with obstinate currents; and other things he added, some of which were but repetitions of former statements, to explain how it came to pass that the passage from Cape Horn to St. Maria had been so exceedingly long; now and then mingling with his words, incidental praises, less qualified than before, to the blacks, for their general good conduct. These particulars were not given consecutively, the servant, at convenient times, using his razor, and so, between the intervals of shaving, the story and panegyric went on with more than usual huskiness.

To Captain Delano’s imagination, now again not wholly at rest, there was something so hollow in the Spaniard’s manner, with apparently some reciprocal hollowness in the servant’s dusky comment of silence, that the idea flashed across him, that possibly master and man, for some unknown purpose, were acting out, both in word and deed, nay, to the very tremor of Don Benito’s limbs, some juggling play before him. Neither did the suspicion of collusion lack

apparent support, from the fact of those whispered conferences before mentioned. But then, what could be the object of enacting this play of the barber before him? At last, regarding the notion as a whimsy, insensibly suggested, perhaps, by the theatrical aspect of Don Benito in his harlequin ensign, Captain Delano speedily banished it.

The shaving over, the servant bestirred himself with a small bottle of scented waters, pouring a few drops on the head, and then diligently rubbing; the vehemence of the exercise causing the muscles of his face to twitch rather strangely.

His next operation was with comb, scissors and brush, going round and round, smoothing a curl here, clipping an unruly whisker-hair there, giving a graceful sweep to the temple-lock, with other impromptu touches evincing the hand of a master; while, like any resigned gentleman in barber's hands, Don Benito bore all, much less uneasily, at least, than he had done the razoring; indeed, he sat so pale and rigid now, that the negro seemed a Nubian sculptor finishing off a white statue-head.

All being over at last, the standard of Spain removed, tumbled up, and tossed back into the flag-locker, the negro's warm breath blowing away any stray hair which might have lodged down his master's neck; collar and cravat readjusted; a speck of lint whisked off the velvet lapel; all this being done; backing off a little space, and pausing with an expression of subdued self-complacency, the servant for a moment surveyed his master, as, in toilet at least, the creature of his own tasteful hands.

Captain Delano playfully complimented him upon his achievement; at the same time congratulating Don Benito.

But neither sweet waters, nor shampooing, nor fidelity, nor sociality, delighted the Spaniard. Seeing him relapsing into forbidding gloom, and still remaining seated, Captain Delano, thinking that his presence was undesired just then, withdrew, on pretense of seeing whether, as he had prophesied, any signs of a breeze were visible.

Walking forward to the mainmast, he stood awhile thinking over the scene, and not without some undefined misgivings, when he heard a noise near the cuddy, and turning, saw the negro, his hand to his cheek. Advancing, Captain Delano perceived that the cheek was bleed-

ing. He was about to ask the cause, when the negro's wailing soliloquy enlightened him.

"Ah, when will master get better from his sickness; only the sour heart that sour sickness breeds made him serve Babo so; cutting Babo with the razor, because, only by accident, Babo had given master one little scratch, and for the first time in so many a day, too. Ah, ah, ah," holding his hand to his face.

Is it possible, thought Captain Delano; was it to wreak in private his Spanish spite against this poor friend of his, that Don Benito, by his sullen manner, impelled me to withdraw? Ah, this slavery breeds ugly passions in man.—Poor fellow!

He was about to speak in sympathy to the negro, but with a timid reluctance he now re-entered the cuddy.

Presently master and man came forth; Don Benito leaning on his servant as if nothing had happened.

But a sort of love-quarrel, after all, thought Captain Delano.

He accosted Don Benito, and they slowly walked together. They had gone but a few paces, when the steward—a tall, rajah-looking mulatto, orientally set off with a pagoda turban formed by three or four Madras handkerchiefs wound about his head, tier on tier—approaching with a salaam, announced lunch in the cabin.

On their way thither, the two captains were preceded by the mulatto, who, turning round as he advanced, with continual smiles and bows, ushered them in, a display of elegance which quite completed the insignificance of the small bare-headed Babo, who, as if not unconscious of inferiority, eyed askance the graceful steward. But in part, Captain Delano imputed his jealous watchfulness to that peculiar feeling which the full-blooded African entertains for the adulterated one. As for the steward, his manner, if not bespeaking much dignity or self-respect, yet evidenced his extreme desire to please; which is doubly meritorious, as at once Christian and Chesterfieldian.

Captain Delano observed with interest that while the complexion of the mulatto was hybrid, his physiognomy was European—classically so.

"Don Benito," whispered he, "I am glad to see this usher-of-the-golden-rod of yours; the sight refutes an ugly remark once made to me

by a Barbados planter; that when a mulatto has a regular European face, look out for him; he is a devil. But see, your steward here has features more regular than King George's of England, and yet there he nods, and bows, and smiles; a king, indeed—the king of kind hearts and polite fellows. What a pleasant voice he has, too?"

"He has, Señor."

"But, tell me, has he not, so far as you have known him, always proved a good, worthy fellow?" said Captain Delano, pausing, while with a final genuflection the steward disappeared into the cabin, "come, for the reason just mentioned, I am curious to know."

"Francesco is a good man," rather sluggishly responded Don Benito, like a phlegmatic appreciator, who would neither find fault nor flatter.

"Ah, I thought so. For it were strange, indeed, and not very creditable to us white-skins, if a little of our blood mixed with the African's, should, far from improving the latter's quality, have the sad effect of pouring vitriolic acid into black broth; improving the hue, perhaps, but not the wholesomeness."

"Doubtless, doubtless, Señor, but"—glancing at Babo—"not to speak of negroes, your planter's remark I have heard applied to the Spanish and Indian intermixtures in our provinces. But I know nothing about the matter," he listlessly added.

And here they entered the cabin.

The lunch was a frugal one. Some of Captain Delano's fresh fish and pumpkins, biscuit and salt beef, the reserved bottle of cider, and the San Dominick's last bottle of Canary.

As they entered, Francesco, with two or three colored aids, was hovering over the table giving the last adjustments. Upon perceiving their master they withdrew, Francesco making a smiling congé, and the Spaniard, without condescending to notice it, fastidiously remarking to his companion that he relished not superfluous attendance.

Without companions, host and guest sat down, like a childless married couple, at opposite ends of the table, Don Benito waving Captain Delano to his place, and, weak as he was, insisting upon that gentleman being seated before himself.

The negro placed a rug under Don Benito's feet, and a cushion behind his back, and then

stood behind, not his master's chair, but Captain Delano's. At first, this a little surprised the latter. But it was soon evident that, in taking his position, the black was still true to his master; since by facing him he could the more readily anticipate his slightest want.

"This is an uncommonly intelligent fellow of yours, Don Benito," whispered Captain Delano across the table.

"You say true, Señor."

During the repast, the guest again reverted to parts of Don Benito's story, begging further particulars here and there. He inquired how it was that the scurvy and fever should have committed such wholesale havoc upon the whites, while destroying less than half of the blacks. As if this question reproduced the whole scene of plague before the Spaniard's eyes, miserably reminding him of his solitude in a cabin where before he had had so many friends and officers round him, his hand shook, his face became hueless, broken words escaped; but directly the sane memory of the past seemed replaced by insane terrors of the present. With starting eyes he stared before him at vacancy. For nothing was to be seen but the hand of his servant pushing the Canary over towards him. At length a few sips served partially to restore him. He made random reference to the different constitutions of races, enabling one to offer more resistance to certain maladies than another. The thought was new to his companion.

Presently Captain Delano, intending to say something to his host concerning the pecuniary part of the business he had undertaken for him, especially—since he was strictly accountable to his owners—with reference to the new suit of sails, and other things of that sort; and naturally preferring to conduct such affairs in private, was desirous that the servant should withdraw; imagining that Don Benito for a few minutes could dispense with his attendance. He, however, waited awhile; thinking that, as the conversation proceeded, Don Benito, without being prompted, would perceive the propriety of the step.

But it was otherwise. At last catching his host's eye, Captain Delano, with a slight backward gesture of his thumb, whispered, "Don Benito, pardon me, but there is an interference with the full expression of what I have to say to you."

Upon this the Spaniard changed countenance; which was imputed to his resenting the hint, as in some way a reflection upon his servant. After a moment's pause, he assured his guest that the black's remaining with them could be of no dis-
 5 service, because since losing his officers he had made Babo (whose original office, it now appeared, had been captain of the slaves) not only his constant attendant and companion, but in all things his confidant.

After this, nothing more could be said; though, indeed, Captain Delano could hardly avoid some little tinge of irritation upon being left ungratified in so inconsiderable a wish, by one, too, for whom he intended such solid serv-
 10 ices. But it is only his querulousness, thought he; and so filling his glass he proceeded to business.

The price of the sails and other matters was fixed upon. But while this was being done, the American observed that, though his original offer of assistance had been hailed with hectic animation, yet now when it was reduced to a business transaction, indifference and apathy were betrayed. Don Benito, in fact, appeared to
 20 submit to hearing the details more out of regard to common propriety, than from any impression that weighty benefit to himself and his voyage was involved.

Soon, this manner became still more reserved. The effort was vain to seek to draw him into social talk. Gnawed by his splenetic mood, he sat twitching his beard, while to little purpose the hand of his servant, mute as that on the wall, slowly pushed over the Canary.

Lunch being over, they sat down on the cushioned transom; the servant placing a pillow behind his master. The long continuance of the calm had now affected the atmosphere. Don Benito sighed heavily, as if for breath.

"Why not adjourn to the cuddy," said Captain Delano; "there is more air there." But the host sat silent and motionless.

Meantime his servant knelt before him with a large fan of feathers. And Francesco coming in on tiptoes, handed the negro a little cup of aromatic waters, with which at intervals he chafed his master's brow; smoothing the hair along the temples as a nurse does a child's. He spoke no word. He only rested his eye on his master's, as if, amid all Don Benito's distress, a

little to refresh his spirit by the silent sight of fidelity.

Presently the ship's bell sounded two o'clock, and through the cabin-windows a slight rippling of the sea was discerned; and from the desired direction.

"There," exclaimed Captain Delano, "I told you so, Don Benito, look!"

He had risen to his feet, speaking in a very animated tone, with a view the more to rouse his companion. But though the crimson curtain of the stern-window near him that moment fluttered against his pale cheek, Don Benito seemed to have even less welcome for the breeze than the calm.

Poor fellow, thought Captain Delano, bitter experience has taught him that one ripple does not make a wind, any more than one swallow a summer. But he is mistaken for once. I will get his ship in for him, and prove it.

Briefly alluding to his weak condition, he urged his host to remain quietly where he was, since he (Captain Delano) would with pleasure take upon himself the responsibility of making the best use of the wind.

Upon gaining the deck, Captain Delano started at the unexpected figure of Atufal, monumentally fixed at the threshold, like one of those sculptured porters of black marble guarding the porches of the Egyptian tombs.

But this time the start was, perhaps, purely physical. Atufal's presence, singularly attesting docility even in sullenness, was contrasted with that of the hatchet-polishers, who in patience evinced their industry; while both spectacles showed, that lax as Don Benito's general authority might be, still, whenever he chose to exert it, no man so savage or colossal but must, more or less, bow.

Snatching a trumpet which hung from the bulwarks, with a free step Captain Delano advanced to the forward edge of the poop, issuing his orders in his best Spanish. The few sailors and many negroes, all equally pleased, obediently set about heading the ship toward the harbor.

While giving some directions about setting a lower stu'n'-sail, suddenly Captain Delano heard a voice faithfully repeating his orders. Turning, he saw Babo, now for the time acting, under the pilot, his original part of captain of the slaves.

This assistance proved valuable. Tattered sails and warped yards were soon brought into some trim. And no brace or halyard was pulled but to the blithe songs of the inspired negroes

Good fellows, thought Captain Delano, a little training would make fine sailors of them. Why see, the very women pull and sing, too. These must be some of those Ashantee negresses that make such capital soldiers, I've heard. But who's at the helm? I must have a good hand there

He went to see.

The San Dominick steered with a cumbrous tiller, with large horizontal pulleys attached. At each pulley-end stood a subordinate black, and between them, at the tiller-head, the responsible post, a Spanish seaman, whose countenance evinced his due share in the general hopefulness and confidence at the coming of the breeze

He proved the same man who had behaved with so shame-faced an air on the windlass.

"Ah,—it is you, my man," exclaimed Captain Delano—"well, no more sheep's-eyes now,—look straight forward and keep the ship so. Good hand, I trust? And want to get into the harbor, don't you?"

The man assented with an inward chuckle, grasping the tiller-head firmly. Upon this, unperceived by the American, the two blacks eyed the sailor intently.

Finding all right at the helm, the pilot went forward to the forecabin, to see how matters stood there.

The ship now had way enough to breast the current. With the approach of evening the breeze would be sure to freshen.

Having done all that was needed for the present, Captain Delano, giving his last orders to the sailors, turned aft to report affairs to Don Benito in the cabin; perhaps additionally incited to rejoin him by the hope of snatching a moment's private chat while his servant was engaged upon deck.

From opposite sides, there were, beneath the poop, two approaches to the cabin; one further forward than the other, and consequently communicating with a longer passage. Marking the servant still above, Captain Delano, taking the highest entrance—the one last named, and at whose porch Atufal still stood—hurried on his way, till, arrived at the cabin threshold, he paused an instant, a little to recover from his

eagerness. Then, with the words of his intended business upon his lips, he entered. As he advanced toward the seated Spaniard, he heard another footstep, keeping time with his. From the opposite door, a salver in hand, the servant was likewise advancing

"Confound the faithful fellow," thought Captain Delano; "what a vexatious coincidence."

Possibly, the vexation might have been something different, were it not for the brisk confidence inspired by the breeze. But even as it was, he felt a slight twinge, from a sudden indefinite association in his mind of Babo with Atufal.

"Don Benito," said he, "I give you joy; the breeze will hold, and will increase. By the way, your tall man and time-piece, Atufal, stands without. By your order, of course?"

Don Benito recoiled, as if at some bland satirical touch, delivered with such adroit garnish of apparent good breeding as to present no handle for retort.

He is like one flayed alive, thought Captain Delano; where may one touch him without causing a shrink?

The servant moved before his master, adjusting a cushion; recalled to civility, the Spaniard stiffly replied: "you are right. The slave appears where you saw him, according to my command; which is, that if at the given hour I am below, he must take his stand and abide my coming."

"Ah now, pardon me, but that is treating the poor fellow like an ex-king indeed. Ah, Don Benito," smiling, "for all the license you permit in some things, I fear lest, at bottom, you are a bitter hard master."

Again Don Benito shrank; and this time, as the good sailor thought, from a genuine twinge of his conscience.

Conversation now became constrained. In vain Captain Delano called attention to the now perceptible motion of the keel gently cleaving the sea; with lack-lustre eye, Don Benito returned words few and reserved.

By-and-by, the wind having steadily risen, and still blowing right into the harbor, bore the San Dominick swiftly on. Rounding a point of land, the scaler at distance came into open view.

Meantime Captain Delano had again repaired to the deck, remaining there some time. Having at last altered the ship's course, so as to give the

reef a wide berth, he returned for a few moments below.

I will cheer up my poor friend, this time, thought he.

"Better and better, Don Benito," he cried as he blithely re-entered "there will soon be an end to your cares, at least for awhile. For when, after a long, sad voyage, you know, the anchor drops into the haven, all its vast weight seems lifted from the captain's heart. We are getting on famously, Don Benito. My ship is in sight. Look through this side-light here; there she is; all a-taunt-o! The Bachelor's Delight, my good friend. Ah, how this wind braces one up. Come, you must take a cup of coffee with me this evening. My old steward will give you as fine a cup as ever any sultan tasted. What say you, Don Benito, will you?"

At first, the Spaniard glanced feverishly up, casting a longing look towards the sealer, while with mute concern his servant gazed into his face. Suddenly the old ague of coldness returned, and dropping back to his cushions he was silent.

"You do not answer. Come, all day you have been my host; would you have hospitality all on one side?"

"I cannot go," was the response.

"What? It will not fatigue you. The ships will lie together as near as they can, without swinging foul. It will be little more than stepping from deck to deck; which is but as from room to room. Come, come, you must not refuse me."

"I cannot go," decisively and repulsively repeated Don Benito.

Renouncing all but the last appearance of courtesy, with a sort of cadaverous sullenness, and biting his thin nails to the quick, he glanced, almost glared, at his guest, as if impatient that a stranger's presence should interfere with the full indulgence of his morbid hour. Meantime the sound of the parted waters came more and more gurglingly and merrily in at the windows; as reproaching him for his dark spleen; as telling him that, sulk as he might, and go mad with it, nature cared not a jot; since, whose fault was it, pray?

But the foul mood was now at its depth, as the fair wind at its height.

There was something in the man so far beyond any mere unsociality or sourness previously evinced, that even the forbearing good-nature of his guest could no longer endure it. Wholly at a

loss to account for such demeanor, and deeming sickness with eccentricity, however extreme, no adequate excuse, well satisfied, too, that nothing in his own conduct could justify it, Captain Delano's pride began to be roused. Himself became reserved. But all seemed one to the Spaniard. Quitting him, therefore, Captain Delano once more went to the deck.

The ship was now within less than two miles of the sealer. The whale-boat was seen darting over the interval.

To be brief, the two vessels, thanks to the pilot's skill, ere long in neighborly style lay anchored together.

Before returning to his own vessel, Captain Delano had intended communicating to Don Benito the smaller details of the proposed services to be rendered. But, as it was, unwilling anew to subject himself to rebuffs, he resolved, now that he had seen the San Dominick safely moored, immediately to quit her, without further allusion to hospitality or business. Indefinitely postponing his ulterior plans, he would regulate his future actions according to future circumstances. His boat was ready to receive him; but his host still tarried below. Well, thought Captain Delano, if he has little breeding, the more need to show mine. He descended to the cabin to bid a ceremonious, and, it may be, tacitly rebukeful adieu. But to his great satisfaction, Don Benito, as if he began to feel the weight of that treatment with which his slighted guest had, not indecorously, retaliated upon him, now supported by his servant, rose to his feet, and grasping Captain Delano's hand, stood tremulous; too much agitated to speak. But the good augury hence drawn was suddenly dashed, by his resuming all his previous reserve, with augmented gloom, as, with half-averted eyes, he silently reseated himself on his cushions. With a corresponding return of his own chilled feelings, Captain Delano bowed and withdrew.

He was hardly midway in the narrow corridor, dim as a tunnel, leading from the cabin to the stairs, when a sound, as of the tolling for execution in some jail-yard, fell on his ears. It was the echo of the ship's flawed bell, striking the hour, drearily reverberated in this subterranean vault. Instantly, by a fatality not to be withstood, his mind, responsive to the portent, swarmed with superstitious suspicions. He paused. In images far swifter than these sentences, the minutest

details of all his former distrusts swept through him.

Hitherto, credulous good-nature had been too ready to furnish excuses for reasonable fears. Why was the Spaniard, so superfluously punctilious at times, now heedless of common propriety in not accompanying to the side his departing guest? Did indisposition forbid? Indisposition had not forbidden more irksome exertion that day. His last equivocal demeanor recurred. He had risen to his feet, grasped his guest's hand, motioned toward his hat; then, in an instant, all was eclipsed in sinister muteness and gloom. Did this imply one brief, repentant relenting at the final moment, from some iniquitous plot, followed by remorseless return to it? His last glance seemed to express a calamitous, yet acquiescent farewell to Captain Delano forever. Why decline the invitation to visit the sealer that evening? Or was the Spaniard less hardened than the Jew, who refrained not from supping at the board of him whom the same night he meant to betray? What imported all those day-long enigmas and contradictions, except they were intended to mystify, preliminary to some stealthy blow? Atufal, the pretended rebel, but punctual shadow, that moment lurked by the threshold without. He seemed a sentry, and more. Who, by his own confession, had stationed him there? Was the negro now lying in wait?

The Spaniard behind—his creature before: to rush from darkness to light was the involuntary choice.

The next moment, with clenched jaw and hand, he passed Atufal, and stood unharmed in the light. As he saw his trim ship lying peacefully at her anchor, and almost within ordinary call; as he saw his household boat, with familiar faces in it, patiently rising and falling on the short waves by the San Dominick's side; and then, glancing about the decks where he stood, saw the oakum-pickers still gravely plying their fingers; and heard the low, buzzing whistle and industrious hum of the hatchet-polishers, still bestirring themselves over their endless occupation; and more than all, as he saw the benign aspect of nature, taking her innocent repose in the evening; the screened sun in the quiet camp of the west shining out like the mild light from Abraham's tent; as his charmed eye and ear took in all these, with the chained figure of the black, the clenched jaw and hand relaxed. Once again

he smiled at the phantoms which had mocked him, and felt something like a tinge of remorse, that, by indulging them even for a moment, he should, by implication, have betrayed an almost atheist doubt of the ever-watchful Providence above.

There was a few minutes' delay, while, in obedience to his orders, the boat was being hooked along to the gangway. During this interval, a sort of saddened satisfaction stole over Captain Delano, at thinking of the kindly offices he had that day discharged for a stranger. Ah, thought he, after good actions one's conscience is never ungrateful, however much so the benefited party may be.

Presently, his foot, in the first act of descent into the boat, pressed the first round of the side-ladder, his face presented inward upon the deck. In the same moment, he heard his name courteously sounded; and, to his pleased surprise, saw Don Benito advancing—an unwonted energy in his air, as if, at the last moment, intent upon making amends for his recent discourtesy. With instinctive good feeling, Captain Delano, withdrawing his foot, turned and reciprocally advanced. As he did so, the Spaniard's nervous eagerness increased, but his vital energy failed; so that, the better to support him, the servant, placing his master's hand on his naked shoulder, and gently holding it there, formed himself into a sort of crutch.

When the two captains met, the Spaniard again fervently took the hand of the American, at the same time casting an earnest glance into his eyes, but, as before, too much overcome to speak.

I have done him wrong, self-reproachfully thought Captain Delano; his apparent coldness has deceived me; in no instance has he meant to offend.

Meantime, as if fearful that the continuance of the scene might too much unstring his master, the servant seemed anxious to terminate it. And so, still presenting himself as a crutch, and walking between the two captains, he advanced with them towards the gangway; while still, as if full of kindly contrition, Don Benito would not let go the hand of Captain Delano, but retained it in his, across the black's body.

Soon they were standing by the side, looking over into the boat, whose crew turned up their curious eyes. Waiting a moment for the Spaniard

to relinquish his hold, the now embarrassed Captain Delano lifted his foot, to overstep the threshold of the open gangway; but still Don Benito would not let go his hand. And yet, with an agitated tone, he said, "I can go no further, here I must bid you adieu. Adieu, my dear, dear Don Amasa. Go—go!" suddenly tearing his hand loose, "go, and God guard you better than me, my best friend."

Not unaffected, Captain Delano would now have lingered; but catching the meekly admonitory eye of the servant, with a hasty farewell he descended into his boat, followed by the continual adieus of Don Benito, standing rooted in the gangway.

Seating himself in the stern, Captain Delano, making a last salute, ordered the boat shoved off. The crew had their oars on end. The bowsmen pushed the boat a sufficient distance for the oars to be lengthwise dropped. The instant that was done, Don Benito sprang over the bulwarks, falling at the feet of Captain Delano; at the same time, calling towards his ship, but in tones so frenzied, that none in the boat could understand him. But, as if not equally obtuse, three sailors, from three different and distant parts of the ship, splashed into the sea, swimming after their captain, as if intent upon his rescue.

The dismayed officer of the boat eagerly asked what this meant. To which, Captain Delano, turning a disdainful smile upon the unaccountable Spaniard, answered that, for his part, he neither knew nor cared; but it seemed as if Don Benito had taken it into his head to produce the impression among his people that the boat wanted to kidnap him. "Or else—give way for your lives," he wildly added, starting at a clattering hubbub in the ship, above which rang the tocsin of the hatchet-polishers; and seizing Don Benito by the throat he added, "this plotting pirate means murder!" Here, in apparent verification of the words, the servant, a dagger in his hand, was seen on the rail overhead, poised, in the act of leaping, as if with desperate fidelity to befriend his master to the last; while, seemingly to aid the black, the three Spanish sailors were trying to clamber into the hampered bow. Meantime, the whole host of negroes, as if inflamed at the sight of their jeopardized captain, impended in one sooty avalanche over the bulwarks.

All this, with what preceded, and what fol-

lowed, occurred with such involutions of rapidity, that past, present, and future seemed one.

Seeing the negro coming, Captain Delano had flung the Spaniard aside, almost in the very act of clutching him and, by the unconscious recoil, shifting his place, with arms thrown up, so promptly grappled the servant in his descent, that with dagger presented at Captain Delano's heart, the black seemed of purpose to have leaped there as to his mark. But the weapon was wrenched away, and the assailant dashed down into the bottom of the boat, which now, with disentangled oars, began to speed through the sea.

At this juncture, the left hand of Captain Delano, on one side, again clutched the half-reclined Don Benito, heedless that he was in a speechless faint, while his right foot, on the other side, ground the prostrate negro; and his right arm pressed for added speed on the after oar, his eye bent forward, encouraging his men to their utmost.

But here, the officer of the boat, who had at last succeeded in beating off the towing sailors, and was now, with face turned aft, assisting the bowsman at his oar, suddenly called to Captain Delano, to see what the black was about; while a Portuguese oarsman shouted to him to give heed to what the Spaniard was saying.

Glancing down at his feet, Captain Delano saw the freed hand of the servant aiming with a second dagger—a small one, before concealed in his wool—with this he was snakishly writhing up from the boat's bottom, at the heart of his master, his countenance lividly vindictive, expressing the centred purpose of his soul; while the Spaniard, half-choked, was vainly shrinking away, with husky words, incoherent to all but the Portuguese.

That moment, across the long-benighted mind of Captain Delano, a flash of revelation swept, illuminating in unanticipated clearness his host's whole mysterious demeanor, with every enigmatic event of the day, as well as the entire past voyage of the *San Dominick*. He smote Babo's hand down, but his own heart smote him harder. With infinite pity he withdrew his hold from Don Benito. Not Captain Delano, but Don Benito, the black, in leaping into the boat, had intended to stab.

Both the black's hands were held, as, glancing up towards the *San Dominick*, Captain Delano,

now with the scales dropped from his eyes, saw the negroes, not in misrule, not in tumult, not as if frantically concerned for Don Benito, but with mask torn away, flourishing hatchets and knives, in ferocious piratical revolt. Like delirious black dervishes, the six Ashantees danced on the poop. Prevented by their foes from springing into the water, the Spanish boys were hurrying up to the topmost spars, while such of the few Spanish sailors, not already in the sea, less alert, were descried, helplessly mixed in, on deck, with the blacks.

Meantime Captain Delano hailed his own vessel, ordering the ports up, and the guns run out. But by this time the cable of the San Dominick had been cut; and the fag-end, in lashing out, whipped away the canvas shroud about the beak, suddenly revealing, as the bleached hull swung round towards the open ocean, death for the figurehead, in a human skeleton; chalky comment on the chalked words below, "*Follow your leader.*"

At the sight, Don Benito, covering his face, wailed out: "'Tis he, Aranda! my murdered, unburied friend!"

Upon reaching the sealer, calling for ropes, Captain Delano bound the negro, who made no resistance, and had him hoisted to the deck. He would then have assisted the now almost helpless Don Benito up the side; but Don Benito, wan as he was, refused to move, or be moved, until the negro should have been first put below out of view. When, presently assured that it was done, he no more shrank from the ascent.

The boat was immediately dispatched back to pick up the three swimming sailors. Meantime, the guns were in readiness, though, owing to the San Dominick having glided somewhat astern of the sealer, only the aftermost one could be brought to bear. With this, they fired six times; thinking to cripple the fugitive ship by bringing down her spars. But only a few inconsiderable ropes were shot away. Soon the ship was beyond the gun's range, steering broad out of the bay; the blacks thickly clustering round the bowsprit, one moment with taunting cries towards the whites, the next with upthrown gestures hailing the now dusky moors of ocean—cawing crows escaped from the hand of the fowler.

The first impulse was to slip the cables and give chase. But, upon second thoughts, to pursue with whale-boat and yawl seemed more promising.

Upon inquiring of Don Benito what firearms they had on board the San Dominick, Captain Delano was answered that they had none that could be used, because, in the earlier stages of the mutiny, a cabin-passenger, since dead, had secretly put out of order the locks of what few muskets there were. But with all his remaining strength, Don Benito entreated the American not to give chase, either with ship or boat; for the negroes had already proved themselves such desperadoes, that, in case of a present assault, nothing but a total massacre of the whites could be looked for. But, regarding this warning as coming from one whose spirit had been crushed by misery, the American did not give up his design.

The boats were got ready and armed. Captain Delano ordered twenty-five men into them. He was going himself when Don Benito grasped his arm.

"What! have you saved my life, Señor, and are you now going to throw away your own?"

The officers also, for reasons connected with their interests and those of the voyage, and a duty owing to the owners, strongly objected against their commander's going. Weighing their remonstrances a moment, Captain Delano felt bound to remain; appointing his chief mate—an athletic and resolute man, who had been a privateer's-man—to head the party. The more to encourage the sailors, they were told, that the Spanish captain considered his ship as good as lost; that she and her cargo, including some gold and silver, were worth more than a thousand doubloons. Take her, and no small part should be theirs. The sailors replied with a shout.

The fugitives had now almost gained an offing. It was nearly night; but the moon was rising. After hard, prolonged pulling, the boats came up on the ship's quarters, at a suitable distance laying upon their oars to discharge their muskets. Having no bullets to return, the negroes sent their yells. But, upon the second volley, Indian-like, they hurtled their hatchets. One took off a sailor's fingers. Another struck the whale-boat's bow, cutting off the rope there, and remaining stuck in the gunwale like a woodman's axe. Snatching it, quivering from its lodgment, the mate hurled it back. The returned gauntlet now stuck in the ship's broken quarter-gallery, and so remained.

The negroes giving too hot a reception, the

whites kept a more respectful distance. Hovering now just out of reach of the hurtling hatchets, they, with a view to the close encounter which must soon come, sought to decoy the blacks into entirely disarming themselves of their most murderous weapons in a hand-to-hand fight, by foolishly flinging them, as missiles, short of the mark, into the sea. But ere long, perceiving the stratagem, the negroes desisted, though not before many of them had to replace their lost hatchets with handspikes, an exchange which, as counted upon, proved, in the end, favorable to the assailants.

Meantime, with a strong wind, the ship still clove the water; the boats alternately falling behind, and pulling up, to discharge fresh volleys.

The fire was mostly directed towards the stern, since there, chiefly, the negroes, at present, were clustering. But to kill or maim the negroes was not the object. To take them, with the ship, was the object. To do it, the ship must be boarded; which could not be done by boats while she was sailing so fast.

A thought now struck the mate. Observing the Spanish boys still aloft, high as they could get, he called to them to descend to the yards, and cut adrift the sails. It was done. About this time, owing to causes hereafter to be shown, two Spaniards, in the dress of sailors, and conspicuously showing themselves, were killed; not by volleys, but by deliberate marksman's shots; while, as it afterwards appeared, during one of the general discharges, Atufal, the black, and the Spaniard at the helm likewise were killed. What now, with the loss of the sails, and loss of leaders, the ship became unmanageable to the negroes.

With creaking masts, she came heavily round to the wind; the prow slowly swinging into view of the boats, its skeleton gleaming in the horizontal moonlight, and casting a gigantic ribbed shadow upon the water. One extended arm of the ghost seemed beckoning the whites to avenge it.

"Follow your leader!" cried the mate; and, one on each bow, the boats boarded. Sealing-spears and cutlasses crossed hatchets and handspikes. Huddled upon the long-boat amidships, the negroes raised a wailing chant, whose chorus was the clash of the steel.

For a time, the attack wavered; the negroes wedging themselves to beat it back; the half-repelled sailors, as yet unable to gain a footing,

fighting as troopers in the saddle, one leg sideways flung over the bulwarks, and one without, plying their cutlasses like carters' whips. But in vain. They were almost overborne, when rallying themselves into a squad as one man, with a huzza, they sprang inboard, where, entangled, they involuntarily separated again. For a few breaths' space there was a vague, muffled, inner sound, as of submerged sword-fish rushing hither and thither through shoals of black-fish. Soon, in a reunited band, and joined by the Spanish seamen, the whites came to the surface, irresistibly driving the negroes toward the stern. But a barricade of casks and sacks, from side to side, had been thrown up by the main-mast. Here the negroes faced about, and though scorning peace or truce, yet fain would have had a respite. But, without pause, overleaping the barrier, the unflagging sailors again closed. Exhausted, the blacks now fought in despair. Their red tongues lolled, wolf-like, from their black mouths. But the pale sailors' teeth were set; not a word spoken; and, in five minutes more, the ship was won.

Nearly a score of the negroes were killed. Exclusive of those by the balls, many were mangled; their wounds—mostly inflicted by the long-edged sealing spears—resembling those shaven ones of the English at Preston Pans, made by the poled scythes of the Highlanders. On the other side, none were killed, though several were wounded; some severely, including the mate. The surviving negroes were temporarily secured, and the ship, towed back into the harbor at midnight, once more lay anchored.

Omitting the incidents and arrangements ensuing, suffice it that, after two days spent in refitting, the two ships sailed in company for Concepcion in Chili, and thence for Lima in Peru; where, before the vice-regal courts, the whole affair, from the beginning, underwent investigation.

Though, midway on the passage, the ill-fated Spaniard, relaxed from constraint, showed some signs of regaining health with free-will; yet, agreeably to his own foreboding, shortly before arriving at Lima, he relapsed, finally becoming so reduced as to be carried ashore in arms. Hearing of his story and plight, one of the many religious institutions of the City of Kings opened an hospitable refuge to him, where both physician and priest were his nurses, and a member

of the order volunteered to be his one special guardian and consoler, by night and by day.

The following extracts, translated from one of the official Spanish documents, will, it is hoped, shed light on the preceding narrative, as well as, in the first place, reveal the true port of departure and true history of the San Dominick's voyage, down to the time of her touching at the island of St. Maria.

But, ere the extracts come, it may be well to preface them with a remark.

The document selected, from among many others, for partial translation, contains the deposition of Benito Cereno; the first taken in the case. Some disclosures therein were, at the time, held dubious for both learned and natural reasons. The tribunal inclined to the opinion that the deponent, not undisturbed in his mind by recent events, raved of some things which could never have happened. But subsequent depositions of the surviving sailors, bearing out the revelations of their captain in several of the strangest particulars, gave credence to the rest. So that the tribunal, in its final decision, rested its capital sentences upon statements which, had they lacked confirmation, it would have deemed it but duty to reject.

I, DON JOSE DE ABOS AND PADILLA, His Majesty's Notary for the Royal Revenue, and Register of this Province, and Notary Public of the Holy Crusade of this Bishopric, etc.

Do certify and declare, as much as is requisite in law, that, in the criminal cause commenced the twenty-fourth of the month of September, in the year seventeen hundred and ninety-nine, against the Senegal negroes of the ship San Dominick, the following declaration before me was made:

Declaration of the first witness, DON BENITO CERENO.

The same day, and month, and year, His Honor, Doctor Juan Martinez de Rozas, Councilor of the Royal Audience of this Kingdom, and learned in the law of this Intendency, ordered the captain of the ship San Dominick, Don Benito Cereno, to appear; which he did in his litter, attended by the monk Infelez; of whom he received the oath, which he took by God, our Lord, and a sign of the Cross; under which he promised to tell the truth of whatever he should know and should be asked;—and being interrogated agreeably to the tenor of the act commencing the process, he said, that on the twentieth of May

last, he set sail with his ship from the port of Valparaiso, bound to that of Callao, loaded with the produce of the country beside thirty cases of hardware and one hundred and sixty blacks, of both sexes, mostly belonging to Don Alexandro Aranda, gentleman, of the city of Mendoza; that the crew of the ship consisted of thirty-six men, beside the persons who went as passengers; that the negroes were in part as follows. . . .

[Here, in the original, follows a list of some fifty names, descriptions, and ages, compiled from certain recovered documents of Aranda's, and also from recollections of the deponent, from which portions only are extracted.]

—One, from about eighteen to nineteen years, named José, and this was the man that waited upon his master, Don Alexandro, and who speaks well the Spanish, having served him four or five years, . . . A mulatto, named Francesco, the cabin steward, of a good person and voice, having sung in the Valparaiso churches, native of the province of Buenos Ayres, aged about thirty-five years. A smart negro, named Dago, who had been for many years a gravedigger among the Spaniards, aged forty-six years. . . . Four old negroes, born in Africa, from sixty to seventy, but sound, caulkers by trade, whose names are as follows:—the first was named Muri, and he was killed (as was also his son named Diamelo); the second, Nacta; the third, Yola, likewise killed; the fourth, Ghofan; and six full-grown negroes, aged from thirty to forty-five, all raw, and born among the Ashantees—Martinqui, Yan, Lecbe, Mapenda, Yambaio, Akim; four of whom were killed; . . . a powerful negro named Atufal, who being supposed to have been a chief in Africa, his owner set great store by him. . . . And a small negro of Senegal, but some years among the Spaniards, aged about thirty, which Negro's name was Babo, . . . that he does not remember the names of the others, but that still expecting the residue of Don Alexandro's papers will be found, will then take due account of them all, and remit to the court; . . . and thirty-nine women and children of all ages.

[The catalogue over, the deposition goes on:]

. . . That all the negroes slept upon deck, as is customary in this navigation, and none wore fetters, because the owner, his friend Aranda, told him that they were all tractable; . . . that on the seventh day after leaving port, at three o'clock in the morning, all the Spaniards being asleep except the two officers on the watch, who were the boatswain, Juan Robles, and the carpenter, Juan Bautista Gayete, and the helmsman and his boy, the negroes revolted suddenly, wounded dangerously the boatswain and the car-

penter, and successively killed eighteen men of those who were sleeping upon deck, some with hand-spikes and hatchets, and others by throwing them alive overboard, after tying them, that of the Spaniards upon deck, they left about seven, as he thinks, alive and tied, to manoeuvre the ship, and three or four more who hid themselves, remained also alive. Although in the act of revolt the negroes made themselves masters of the hatchway, six or seven wounded went through it to the cockpit, without any hindrance on their part; that in the act of revolt, the mate and another person, whose name he does not recollect, attempted to come up through the hatchway, but being quickly wounded, were obliged to return to the cabin; that the deponent resolved at break of day to come up the companion-way, where the negro Babo was, being the ringleader, and Atufal, who assisted him, and having spoken to them, exhorted them to cease committing such atrocities, asking them, at the same time, what they wanted and intended to do, offering, himself, to obey their commands, that, notwithstanding this, they threw, in his presence, three men, alive and tied, overboard, that they told the deponent to come up, and that they would not kill him, which having done, the negro Babo asked him whether there were in those seas any negro countries where they might be carried, and he answered them, No, that the negro Babo afterwards told him to carry them to Senegal, or to the neighbouring islands of St Nicholas; and he answered, that this was impossible, on account of the great distance, the necessity involved of rounding Cape Horn, the bad condition of the vessel, the want of provisions, sails, and water; but that the negro Babo replied to him he must carry them in any way; that they would do and conform themselves to everything the deponent should require as to eating and drinking; that after a long conference, being absolutely compelled to please them, for they threatened him to kill all the whites if they were not, at all events, carried to Senegal, he told them that what was most wanting for the voyage was water; that they would go near the coast to take it, and thence they would proceed on their course; that the negro Babo agreed to it; and the deponent steered towards the intermediate ports, hoping to meet some Spanish or foreign vessel that would save them; that within ten or eleven days they saw the land, and continued by it in the vicinity of Nasca; that the deponent observed that the negroes were not restless and mutinous, because he did not effect the taking in of water, the negro Babo having required, with threats, that it should be done, without fail, the following day; he told him he saw plainly that the coast was steep, and the rivers designated in the maps were not to be found, with other reasons suitable to the circumstances; that the best way would be to go to the island of Santa Maria, where they

might water easily, it being a solitary island, as the foreigners did; that the deponent did not go to Pisco, that was near, nor make any other port of the coast, because the negro Babo had intimated to him several times, that he would kill all the whites the very moment he should perceive any city, town, or settlement of any kind on the shores to which they should be carried, that having determined to go to the island of Santa Maria, as the deponent had planned, for the purpose of trying whether, on the passage or near the island itself, they could find any vessel that should favor them, or whether he could escape from it in a boat to the neighbouring coast of Arruco, to adopt the necessary means he immediately changed his course, steering for the island; that the negroes Babo and Atufal held daily conferences, in which they discussed what was necessary for their design of returning to Senegal, whether they were to kill all the Spaniards, and particularly the deponent, that eight days after parting from the coast of Nasca, the deponent being on the watch a little after day-break, and soon after the negroes had their meeting, the negro Babo came to the place where the deponent was, and told him that he had determined to kill his master, Don Alexandro Aranda, both because he and his companions could not otherwise be sure of their liberty, and that to keep the seamen in subjection, he wanted to prepare a warning of what road they should be made to take did they or any of them oppose him, and that, by means of the death of Don Alexandro, that warning would best be given; but, that what this last meant, the deponent did not at the time comprehend, nor could not, further than that the death of Don Alexandro was intended, and moreover the negro Babo proposed to the deponent to call the mate Raneds, who was sleeping in the cabin, before the thing was done, for fear, as the deponent understood it, that the mate, who was a good navigator, should be killed with Don Alexandro and the rest; that the deponent, who was the friend, from youth of Don Alexandro, prayed and conjured, but all was useless; for the negro Babo answered him that the thing could not be prevented, and that all the Spaniards risked their death if they should attempt to frustrate his will in this matter, or any other; that, in this conflict, the deponent called the mate, Raneds, who was forced to go apart, and immediately the negro Babo commanded the Ashantee Martinqui and the Ashantee Leche to go and commit the murder; that those two went down with hatchets to the berth of Don Alexandro; that, yet half alive and mangled, they dragged him on deck; that they were going to throw him overboard in that state, but the negro Babo stopped them, bidding the murder be completed on the deck before him, which was done, when, by his orders, the body was carried below, forward; that nothing more was seen of it by the de-

ponent for three days, . . . that Don Alonzo Sidonia, an old man, long resident at Valparaiso, and lately appointed to a civil office in Peru, whither he had taken passage, was at the time sleeping in the berth opposite Don Alexandro's; that awakening at his cries, surprised by them, and at the sight of the negroes with their bloody hatchets in their hands, he threw himself into the sea through a window which was near him and was drowned, without it being in the power of the deponent to assist or take him up; . . . that, a short time after killing Aranda, they brought upon deck his german-cousin, of middle-age, Don Francisco Masa, of Mendoza, and the young Don Joaquin, Marques de Aramboalaza, then lately from Spain, with his Spanish servant Ponce, and the three young clerks of Aranda, José Mozairi, Lorenzo Bargas, and Hermenegildo Gandix, all of Cadiz, that Don Joaquin and Hermenegildo Gandix, the negro Babo, for purposes hereafter to appear, preserved alive, but Don Francisco Masa, José Mozairi, and Lorenzo Bargas, with Ponce the servant, beside the boatswain, Juan Robles, the boatswain's mates, Manuel Viscaya and Roderigo Hurta, and four of the sailors, the negro Babo ordered to be thrown alive into the sea, although they made no resistance, nor begged for anything else but mercy, that the boatswain, Juan Robles, who knew how to swim, kept the longest above water, making acts of contrition, and, in the last words he uttered, charged this deponent to cause mass to be said for his soul to our Lady of Succor: . . . that, during the three days which followed, the deponent, uncertain what fate had befallen the remains of Don Alexandro, frequently asked the negro Babo where they were, and, if still on board, whether they were to be preserved for interment ashore, entreating him so to order it; that the negro Babo answered nothing till the fourth day, when at sunrise, the deponent coming on deck, the negro Babo showed him a skeleton, which had been substituted for the ship's proper figurehead—the image of Christopher Colon, the discoverer of the New World; that the negro Babo asked him whose skeleton that was, and whether, from its whiteness, he should not think it a white's; that, upon discovering his face, the negro Babo, coming close, said words to this effect: "Keep faith with the blacks from here to Senegal, or you shall in spirit, as now in body, follow your leader," pointing to the prow; . . . that the same morning the negro Babo took by succession each Spaniard forward, and asked him whose skeleton that was, and whether, from its whiteness, he should not think it a white's; that each Spaniard covered his face; that then to each the negro Babo repeated the words in the first place said to the deponent; . . . that they (the Spaniards), being then assembled aft, the negro Babo harangued them, saying that he had now done all; that the deponent (as navigator for the negroes)

might pursue his course, warning him and all of them that they should, soul and body, go the way of Don Alexandro, if he saw them (the Spaniards) speak or plot anything against them (the negroes)—a threat which was repeated every day, that, before the events last mentioned, they had tied the cook to throw him overboard, for it is not known what thing they heard him speak, but finally the negro Babo spared his life, at the request of the deponent, that a few days after, the deponent, endeavoring not to omit any means to preserve the lives of the remaining whites, spoke to the negroes peace and tranquillity, and agreed to draw up a paper, signed by the deponent and the sailors who could write, as also by the negro Babo, for himself and all the blacks, in which the deponent obliged himself to carry them to Senegal, and they not to kill any more, and he formally to make over to them the ship, with the cargo, with which they were for that time satisfied and quieted. . . . But the next day, the more surely to guard against the sailors' escape, the negro Babo commanded all the boats to be destroyed but the long-boat, which was unseaworthy, and another, a cutter in good condition, which knowing it would yet be wanted for towing the water cask, he had it lowered down into the hold.

[Various particulars of the prolonged and perplexed navigation ensuing here follow, with incidents of a calamitous calm, from which portion one passage is extracted, to wit:]

—That on the fifth day of the calm, all on board suffering much from the heat, and want of water, and five having died in fits, and mad, the negroes became irritable, and for a chance gesture, which they deemed suspicious—though it was harmless—made by the mate, Raneds, to the deponent in the act of handing a quadrant, they killed him; but that for this they were afterwards sorry, the mate being the only remaining navigator on board, except the deponent.

—That omitting other events, which daily happened, and which can only serve uselessly to recall past misfortunes and conflicts, after seventy-three days' navigation, reckoned from the time they sailed from Nasca, during which they navigated under a scanty allowance of water, and were afflicted with the calms before mentioned, they at last arrived at the island of Santa Maria, on the seventeenth of the month of August, at about six o'clock in the afternoon, at which hour they cast anchor very near the American ship, Bachelor's Delight, which lay in the same bay, commanded by the generous Captain Amasa Delano; but at six o'clock in the morning, they had already descried the port, and the negroes became uneasy, as soon as at distance they saw the ship, not having expected to see one there; that the negro Babo pacified them, assuring them that no fear

need be had, that straightway he ordered the figure on the bow to be covered with canvas, as for repairs, and had the decks a little set in order; that for a time the negro Babo and the negro Atufal conferred; that the negro Atufal was for sailing away, but the negro Babo would not, and, by himself, cast about what to do; that at last he came to the deponent, proposing to him to say and do all that the deponent declares to have said and done to the American captain; . . . that the negro Babo warned him that if he varied in the least, or uttered any word, or gave any look that should give the least intimation of the past events or present state, he would instantly kill him, with all his companions, showing a dagger, which he carried hid, saying something which, as he understood it, meant that that dagger would be alert as his eye, that the negro Babo then announced the plan to all his companions, which pleased them, that he then, the better to disguise the truth, devised many expedients, in some of them uniting deceit and defense; that of this sort was the device of the six Ashantees before named, who were his bravoes, that them he stationed on the break of the poop, as if to clean certain hatchets (in cases, which were part of the cargo), but in reality to use them, and distribute them at need, and at a given word he told them; that, among other devices, was the device of presenting Atufal, his right hand man, as chained, though in a moment the chains could be dropped; that in every particular he informed the deponent what part he was expected to enact in every device, and what story he was to tell on every occasion, always threatening him with instant death if he varied in the least: that, conscious that many of the negroes would be turbulent, the negro Babo appointed the four aged negroes, who were caulkers, to keep what domestic order they could on the decks; that again and again he harangued the Spaniards and his companions, informing them of his intent, and of his devices, and of the invented story that this deponent was to tell; charging them lest any of them varied from that story; that these arrangements were made and matured during the interval of two or three hours, between their first sighting the ship and the arrival on board of Captain Amasa Delano; that this happened at about half-past seven o'clock in the morning, Captain Amasa Delano coming in his boat, and all gladly receiving him; that the deponent, as well as he could force himself, acting then the part of principal owner, and a free captain of the ship, told Captain Amasa Delano, when called upon, that he came from Buenos Ayres, bound to Lima, with three hundred negroes; that off Cape Horn, and in a subsequent fever, many negroes had died; that also, by similar casualties, all the sea officers and the greatest part of the crew had died.

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[And so the deposition goes on, circumstantially recounting the fictitious story dictated to the deponent by Babo, and through the deponent imposed upon Captain Delano; and also recounting the friendly offers of Captain Delano, with other things, but all of which is here omitted. After the fictitious story, etc., the deposition proceeds:]

—that the generous Captain Amasa Delano remained on board all the day, till he left the ship anchored at six o'clock in the evening, deponent speaking to him always of his pretended misfortunes, under the forementioned principles, without having had it in his power to tell a single word, or give him the least hint, that he might know the truth and state of things; because the negro Babo, performing the office of an officious servant with all the appearance of submission of the humble slave, did not leave the deponent one moment, that this was in order to observe the deponent's actions and words, for the negro Babo understands well the Spanish; and besides, there were thereabout some others who were constantly on the watch, and likewise understood the Spanish, . . . that upon one occasion, while deponent was standing on the deck conversing with Amasa Delano, by a secret sign the negro Babo drew him (the deponent) aside, the act appearing as if originating with the deponent; that then, he being drawn aside, the negro Babo proposed to him to gain from Amasa Delano full particulars about his ship, and crew, and arms; that the deponent asked "For what?" that the negro Babo answered he might conceive; that, grieved at the prospect of what might overtake the generous Captain Amasa Delano, the deponent at first refused to ask the desired questions, and used every argument to induce the negro Babo to give up this new design; that the negro Babo showed the point of his dagger; that, after the information had been obtained the negro Babo again drew him aside, telling him that that very night he (the deponent) would be captain of two ships instead of one, for that, great part of the American's ship's crew being to be absent fishing, the six Ashantees, without any one else, would easily take it; that at this time he said other things to the same purpose; that no entreaties availed; that before Amasa Delano's coming on board, no hint had been given touching the capture of the American ship: that to prevent this project the deponent was powerless; . . . —that in some things his memory is confused, he cannot distinctly recall every event; . . . —that as soon as they had cast anchor at six of the clock in the evening, as has before been stated, the American Captain took leave, to return to his vessel; that upon a sudden impulse, which the deponent believes to have come from God and his angels, he, after the farewell had been said, followed the gen-

crous Captain Amasa Delano as far as the gunwale, where he stayed, under the pretense of taking leave, until Amasa Delano should have been seated in his boat; that on shoving off, the deponent sprang from the gunwale into the boat, and fell into it, he knows not how, God guarding him, that—

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[Here, in the original, follows the account of what further happened at the escape, and how the San Dominick was retaken, and of the passage to the coast; including in the recital many expressions of "eternal gratitude" to the "generous Captain Amasa Delano." The deposition then proceeds with recapitulatory remarks, and a partial reenumeration of the negroes, making record of their individual part in the past events, with a view to furnishing, according to command of the court, the data whereon to found the criminal sentences to be pronounced. From this position is the following:]

—That he believes that all the negroes, though not in the first place knowing to the design of revolt, when it was accomplished, approved it. . . . That the negro, José, eighteen years old, and in the personal service of Don Alexandro, was the one who communicated the information to the negro Babo, about the state of things in the cabin, before the revolt; that this is known, because, in the preceding midnight, he used to come from his berth, which was under his master's, in the cabin, to the deck where the ringleader and his associates were, and had secret conversations with the negro Babo, in which he was several times seen by the mate; that, one night, the mate drove him away twice; . . . that this same negro José was the one who, without being commanded to do so by the negro Babo, as Lecbe and Martinqui were, stabbed his master, Don Alexandro, after he had been dragged half-lifeless to the deck; . . . that the mulatto steward, Francesco, was of the first band of revolvers, that he was, in all things, the creature and tool of the negro Babo; that, to make his court, he, just before a repast in the cabin, proposed, to the negro Babo, poisoning a dish for the generous Captain Amasa Delano; this is known and believed, because the negroes have said it; but that the negro Babo, having another design, forbade Francesco; . . . that the Ashantee Lecbe was one of the worst of them; for that, on the day the ship was retaken, he assisted in the defense of her, with a hatchet in each hand, with one of which he wounded, in the breast, the chief mate of Amasa Delano, in the first act of boarding; this all knew; that, in sight of the deponent, Lecbe struck, with a hatchet, Don Francisco Masa when, by the negro Babo's orders, he

was carrying him to throw him overboard, alive, beside participating in the murder, before mentioned, of Don Alexandro Aranda, and others of the cabin-passengers, that, owing to the fury with which the Ashantees fought in the engagement with the boats, but this Lecbe and Yan survived, that Yan was bad as Lecbe, that Yan was the man who, by Babo's command, willingly prepared the skeleton of Don Alexandro, in a way the negroes afterwards told the deponent, but which he, so long as reason is left him, can never divulge, that Yan and Lecbe were the two who, in a calm by night, riveted the skeleton to the bow, this also the negroes told him; that the negro Babo was he who traced the inscription below it, that the negro Babo was the plotter from first to last; he ordered every murder, and was the helm and keel of the revolt, that Atufal was his lieutenant in all, but Atufal, with his own hand, committed no murder; nor did the negro Babo; . . . that Atufal was shot, being killed in the fight with boats, ere boarding. . . . that the negresses, of age, were knowing to the revolt, and testified themselves satisfied at the death of their master, Don Alexandro, that, had the negroes not restrained them, they would have tortured to death, instead of simply killing, the Spaniards slain by command of the negro Babo; that the negresses used their utmost influence to have the deponent made away with: that, in the various acts of murder, they sang songs and danced—not gaily, but solemnly; and before the engagement with the boats, as well as during the action, they sang melancholy songs to the negroes, and that this melancholy tone was more inflaming than a different one would have been, and was so intended; that all this is believed because the negroes have said it.

—that of the thirty-six men of the crew, exclusive of the passengers (all of whom are now dead), which the deponent had knowledge of, six only remained alive, with four cabin-boys and ship-boys, not included with the crew; . . . —that the negroes broke an arm of one of the cabin-boys and gave him strokes with hatchets.

[Then follow various random disclosures referring to various periods of time. The following are extracted:]

—That during the presence of Captain Amasa Delano on board, some attempts were made by the sailors, and one by Hermenegildo Gandix, to convey hints to him of the true state of affairs; but that these attempts were ineffectual, owing to fear of incurring death, and, furthermore, owing to the devices which offered contradictions to the true state of affairs, as well as owing to the generosity and piety of Amasa Delano, incapable of sounding such wickedness; . . . that Luys Galgo, a sailor about sixty years of age, and formerly of the king's navy, was one of

those who sought to convey tokens to Captain Amasa Delano; but his intent, though undiscovered, being suspected, he was, on a pretense, made to retire out of sight, and at last into the hold, and there was made away with. This the negroes have since said; . . . that one of the ship-boys feeling, from Captain Amasa Delano's presence, some hopes of release, and not having enough prudence, dropped some chance-word respecting his expectations, which being overheard and understood by a slave-boy with whom he was eating at the time, the latter struck him on the head with a knife, inflicting a bad wound, but of which the boy is now healing; that likewise, not long before the ship was brought to anchor, one of the seamen, steering at the time, endangered himself by letting the blacks remark some expression in his countenance, arising from some cause similar to the above; but this sailor, by his heedful after conduct, escaped; . . . that these statements are made to show the court that from the beginning to the end of the revolt, it was impossible for the deponent and his men to act otherwise than they did; . . . —that the third clerk, Hermenegildo Gandix, who before had been forced to live among the seamen, wearing a seaman's habit, and in all respects appearing to be one for the time; he, Gandix, was killed by a musket ball fired through mistake from the boats before boarding, having in his fright run up the mizzen-rigging, calling to the boats—"don't board," lest upon their boarding the negroes should kill him; that this inducing the Americans to believe he some way favored the cause of the negroes, they fired two balls at him, so that he fell wounded from the rigging, and was drowned in the sea; . . . —that the young Don Joaquin, Marques de Arambolaza, like Hermenegildo Gandix, the third clerk, was degraded to the office and appearance of a common seaman; that upon one occasion, when Don Joaquin shrank, the negro Babo commanded the Ashantee Lecbe to take tar and heat it, and pour it upon Don Joaquin's hands; . . . —that Don Joaquin was killed owing to another mistake of the Americans, but one impossible to be avoided, as upon the approach of the boats, Don Joaquin, with a hatchet tied edge out and upright to his hand, was made by the negroes to appear on the bulwarks; whereupon, seen with arms in his hands and in a questionable attitude, he was shot for a renegade seaman; . . . —that on the person of Don Joaquin was found secreted a jewel, which, by papers that were discovered, proved to have been meant for the shrine of our Lady of Mercy in Lima; a votive offering, beforehand prepared and guarded, to attest his gratitude, when he should have landed in Peru, his last destination, for the safe conclusion of his entire voyage from Spain; . . . —that the jewel, with the other effects of the late Don Joaquin, is in the custody of the brethren of the Hospital de Sacerdotes,

awaiting the disposition of the honorable court, . . . —that, owing to the condition of the deponent, as well as the haste in which the boats departed for the attack, the Americans were not forewarned that there were, among the apparent crew, a passenger and one of the clerks, disguised by the negro Babo, . . . —that, beside the negroes killed in the action, some were killed after the capture and re-anchoring at night, when shackled to the ring-bolts on deck, that these deaths were committed by the sailors, ere they could be prevented. That so soon as informed of it, Captain Amasa Delano used all his authority, and, in particular with his own hand, struck down Martinez Gola, who, having found a razor in the pocket of an old jacket of his, which one of the shackled negroes had on, was aiming it at the negro's throat, that the noble Captain Amasa Delano also wrenched from the hand of Bartholomew Barlo, a dagger secreted at the time of the massacre of the whites, with which he was in the act of stabbing a shackled negro, who, the same day, with another negro, had thrown him down and jumped upon him; . . . —that, for all the events, befalling through so long a time, during which the ship was in the hands of the negro Babo, he cannot here give account; but that, what he has said is the most substantial of what occurs to him at present, and is the truth under the oath which he has taken; which declaration he affirmed and ratified, after hearing it read to him.

He said that he is twenty-nine years of age, and broken in body and mind, that when finally dismissed by the court, he shall not return home to Chili, but betake himself to the monastery on Mount Agonia without; and signed with his honor, and crossed himself, and, for the time, departed as he came, in his litter, with the monk Infelez, to the Hospital de Sacerdotes.

BENITO CERENO

DOCTOR ROZAS.

If the deposition have served as the key to fit into the lock of the complications which precede it, then, as a vault whose door has been flung back, the San Dominick's hull lies open to-day.

Hitherto the nature of this narrative, besides rendering the intricacies in the beginning unavoidable, has more or less required that many things, instead of being set down in the order of occurrence, should be retrospectively, or irregularly given; this last is the case with the following passages, which will conclude the account:

During the long, mild voyage to Lima, there was, as before hinted, a period during which the sufferer a little recovered his health, or, at least in some degree, his tranquillity. Ere the decided relapse which came, the two captains had many

cordial conversations—their fraternal unreserve in singular contrast with former withdrawals.

Again and again, it was repeated, how hard it had been to enact the part forced on the Spaniard by Babo.

“Ah, my dear friend,” Don Benito once said, “at those very times when you thought me so morose and ungrateful, nay when, as you now admit, you half thought me plotting your murder, at those very times my heart was frozen; I could not look at you, thinking of what, both on board this ship and your own, hung, from other hands, over my kind benefactor. And as God lives, Don Amasa, I know not whether desire for my own safety alone could have nerved me to that leap into your boat, had it not been for the thought that, did you, unenlightened, return to your ship, you, my best friend, with all who might be with you, stolen upon, that night, in your hammocks, would never in this world have wakened again. Do but think how you walked this deck, how you sat in this cabin, every inch of ground mined into honeycombs under you. Had I dropped the least hint, made the least advance towards an understanding between us, death, explosive death—yours as mine—would have ended the scene.”

“True, true,” cried Captain Delano, starting, “you saved my life, Don Benito, more than I yours; saved it, too, against my knowledge and will.”

“Nay, my friend,” rejoined the Spaniard, courteous even to the point of religion, “God charmed your life, but you saved mine. To think of some things you did—those smilings and chatings, rash pointings and gesturings. For less than these, they slew my mate, Raneds; but you had the Prince of Heaven’s safe conduct through all ambuscades.”

“Yes, all is owing to Providence, I know; but the temper of my mind that morning was more than commonly pleasant, while the sight of so much suffering, more apparent than real, added to my good-nature, compassion, and charity, happily interweaving the three. Had it been otherwise, doubtless, as you hint, some of my interferences might have ended unhappily enough. Besides, those feelings I spoke of enabled me to get the better of momentary distrust, at times when acuteness might have cost me my life, without saving another’s. Only at the end did my suspicions get the better of me, and

you know how wide of the mark they then proved.”

“Wide indeed,” said Don Benito, sadly; “you were with me all day; stood with me, sat with me, talked with me, looked at me, ate with me, drank with me; and yet, your last act was to clutch for a monster, not only an innocent man, but the most pitiable of all men. To such degree many malign machinations and deceptions impose. So far may even the best men err, in judging the conduct of one with the recesses of whose condition he is not acquainted. But you were forced to it; and you were in time undeceived. Would that, in both respects, it was so ever, and with all men.”

“You generalize, Don Benito; and mournfully enough. But the past is passed; why moralize upon it? Forget it. See, yon bright sun has forgotten it all, and the blue sea, and the blue sky; these have turned over new leaves.”

“Because they have no memory,” he dejectedly replied; “because they are not human.”

“But these mild trades that now fan your cheek, Don Benito, do they not come with a human-like healing to you? Warm friends, steadfast friends are the trades.”

“With their steadfastness they but waft me to my tomb, Señor,” was the foreboding response.

“You are saved,” cried Captain Delano, more and more astonished and pained; “you are saved—what has cast such a shadow upon you?”

“The negro.”

There was silence, while the moody man sat, slowly and unconsciously gathering his mantle about him, as if it were a pall.

There was no more conversation that day.

But if the Spaniard’s melancholy sometimes ended in muteness upon topics like the above, there were others upon which he never spoke at all; on which, indeed, all his old reserves were piled. Pass over the worst and, only to elucidate, let an item or two of these be cited. The dress so precise and costly, worn by him on the day whose events have been narrated, had not willingly been put on. And that silver-mounted sword, apparent symbol of despotic command, was not, indeed, a sword, but the ghost of one. The scabbard, artificially stiffened, was empty.

As for the black—whose brain, not body, had schemed and led the revolt, with the plot—his slight frame, inadequate to that which it held, had at once yielded to the superior muscular

strength of his captor, in the boat. Seeing all was over, he uttered no sound, and could not be forced to. His aspect seemed to say, since I cannot do deeds, I will not speak words. Put in irons in the hold, with the rest, he was carried to Lima. During the passage, Don Benito did not visit him. Nor then, nor at any time after, would he look at him. Before the tribunal he refused. When pressed by the judges he fainted. On the testimony of the sailors alone rested the legal identity of Babo.

Some months after, dragged to the gibbet at the tail of a mule, the black met his voiceless end. The body was burned to ashes, but for many days, the head, that hive of subtlety, fixed on a pole in the Plaza, met, unabashed, the gaze of the whites, and across the Plaza looked towards St. Bartholomew's church, in whose vaults slept then, as now, the recovered bones of Aranda: and across the Rimac bridge looked toward the monastery, on Mount Agonia without, where, three months after being dismissed by the court, Benito Cereno, borne on the bier, did, indeed, follow his leader.

POEMS

Melville's finest poetic passages are to be found in the prose of *Moby-Dick*, but his verse has qualities that remind one of Emily Dickinson's compact and powerful poems. If Melville never attained complete command of the poetic medium, he at least had something to say. The two war poems given below do not resemble the conventional verse occasioned by the Civil War. "Rebel Color-Bearers at Shiloh" is a generous tribute to the defeated South. "To Ned" shows how strong in later life were Melville's memories of the South Seas. The Epilogue to *Clarel* (1876) reveals a reaction to Darwinism similar to that expressed in Lowell's "Credidimus Jovem Regnare."

A UTILITARIAN VIEW OF THE MONITOR'S FIGHT

(1866)

Plain be the phrase, yet apt the verse,
More ponderous than nimble;
For since grimed War here laid aside
His Orient pomp, 'twould ill befit
Overmuch to ply
The rhyme's barbaric cymbal.

• 756 •

Hail to victory without the gaud
Of glory, zeal that needs no fans
Of banners, plain mechanic power
Plied cogently in War now placed—
Where War belongs—
Among the trades and artisans.

Yet this was battle, and intense—
Beyond the strife of fleets heroic;
Deadlier, closer, calm 'mid storm;
No passion; all went on by crank,
Pivot, and screw,
And calculations of caloric.

Needless to dwell; the story's known.
The ringing of those plates on plates
Still ringeth round the world—
The clangor of that blacksmiths' fray.
The anvil-din
Resounds this message from the Fates:

War shall yet be, and to the end,
But war-paint shows the streaks of weather;
War yet shall be, but warriors
Are now but operatives; War's made
Less grand than Peace,
And a singe runs through lace and feather.

REBEL COLOR-BEARERS AT SHILOH

*A plea against the vindictive cry raised by
civilians shortly after the surrender at
Appomattox*
(1866)

"The incident on which this piece [says Melville] is based is narrated in a newspaper account of the battle to be found in the *Rebellion Record*. During the disaster to the National forces on the first day, a brigade on the extreme left found itself isolated. The perils it encountered are given in detail. Among others, the following sentences occur:—

"Under cover of the fire from the bluffs, the rebels rushed down, crossed the ford, and in a moment were seen forming this side of the creek in open fields, and within close musket-range. Their colour-bearers stepped defiantly to the front as the engagement opened furiously; the rebels pouring in sharp, quick volleys of musketry, and their batteries above continuing to support them with a destructive fire. Our sharp-shooters wanted to pick off the audacious rebel colour-bearers, but Colonel Stuart interposed: 'No, no, they're too brave fellows to be killed.'"

The color-bearers facing death
 White in the whirling sulphurous wreath,
 Stand boldly out before the line;
 Right and left their glances go,
 Proud of each other, glorying in their show, 5
 Their battle-flags about them blow,
 And fold them as in flame divine.
 Such living robes are only seen
 Round martyrs burning on the green—
 And martyrs for the Wrong have been. 10

Perish their Cause! but mark the men—
 Mark the planted statues, then
 Draw trigger on them if you can.

The leader of a patriot-band
 Even so could view rebels who so could stand;
 stand,
 And this when peril pressed him sore,
 Left aidless in the shivered front of war— 20
 Skulkers behind, defiant foes before,
 And fighting with a broken brand.
 The challenge in that courage rare—
 Courage defenseless, proudly bare—
 Never could tempt him; he could dare 25
 Strike up the leveled rifle there.

Sunday at Shiloh, and the day
 When Stonewall charged—McClellan's crimson
 May,
 And Chickamauga's wave of death,
 And of the Wilderness the cypress wreath—
 All these have passed away.
 The life in the veins of Treason lags,
 Here daring color-bearers drop their flags,
 And yield. *Now* shall we fire?
 Can poor spite be?
 Shall nobleness in victory less aspire
 Than in reverse? Spare Spleen her ire,
 And think how Grant met Lee.

"FORMERLY A SLAVE"

*An idealized Portrait, by E. Vedder, in the
 Spring Exhibition of the National
 Academy, 1865
 (1866)*

The sufferance of her race is shown,
 And retrospect of life,
 Which now too late deliverance dawns upon;
 Yet is she not at strife.

Her children's children they shall know
 The good withheld from her;
 And so her reverie takes prophetic cheer—
 In spirit she sees the stir

Far down the depth of thousand years,
 And marks the revel shine;
 Her dusky face is lit with sober light,
 Sibylline, yet benign.

EPILOGUE TO *CLAREL* (1876)

*If Luther's day expand to Darwin's year,
 Shall that exclude the hope—foreclose the fear?* 15

Unmoved by all the claims our times avow,
 The Ancient Sphinx still keeps the porch of
 shade,
 And comes Despair, whom not her calm may
 cow, 20
 And coldly on that adamant brow
 Scrawls undeterred his bitter pasquinade.
 But Faith (who from the scrawl indignant
 turns)
 25 With blood warm oozing from her wounded
 trust,
 Inscribes even on her shards of broken urns
 The sign o' the cross—the *spirit above the dust!*

Yea, ape and angel, strife and old debate—
 The harps of heaven and dreary gongs of hell;
 Science the feud can only aggravate—
 No umpire she betwixt the chimes and knell:
 The running battle of the star and clod 35
 Shall run forever—if there be no God.

Degrees we know, unknown in days before;
 The light is greater, hence the shadow more;
 And tantalized and apprehensive Man
 40 Appealing—Wherefore ripen us to pain?
 Seems there the spokesman of dumb Nature's
 train.

But through such strange illusions have they
 passed
 45 Who in life's pilgrimage have baffled striven—
 Even death may prove unreal at the last,
 And stoics be astounded into heaven.

Then keep thy heart, though yet but ill-re-
 signed—
 50 Clarel, thy heart, the issues there but mind;

That like the crocus budding through the snow—
 That like a swimmer rising from the deep—
 That like a burning secret which doth go
 Even from the bosom that would hoard and
 keep,
 Emerge thou mayst from the last whelming sea,
 And prove that death but routs life into victory.

TO NED
 (1888)

Where is the world we roved, Ned Bunn?
 Hollows thereof lay rich in shade
 By voyagers old inviolate thrown
 Ere Paul Pry cruised with Pelf and Trade.
 To us old lads some thoughts come home
 Who roamed a world young lads no more
 shall roam.

Nor less the satiate year impends
 When, wearying of routine-resorts,
 The pleasure-hunter shall break loose,
 Ned, for our Pantheistic ports:—
 Marquesas and glenned isles that be
 Authentic Edens in a Pagan sea.

The charm of scenes untried shall lure,
 And, Ned, a legend urge the flight—
 The Typee-truants under stars
 Unknown to Shakespere's *Midsummer-Night*;

And man, if lost to Saturn's Age,
 Yet feeling life no Syrian pilgrimage.

But, tell, shall he, the tourist, find
 5 Our isles the same in violet-glow
 Enamoring us what years and years—
 Ah, Ned, what years and years ago!
 Well, Adam advances, smart in pace,
 But scarce by violets that advance you trace.

10 But we, in anchor-watches calm,
 The Indian Psyche's languor won,
 And, musing, breathed primeval balm
 From Edens ere yet overrun;
 15 Marvelling mild if mortal twice,
 Here and hereafter, touch a Paradise.

ART
 (1891)

20 In placid hours well-pleased we dream
 Of many a brave unbodied scheme.
 But form to lend, pulsed life create,
 25 What unlike things must meet and mate:
 A flame to melt—a wind to freeze;
 Sad patience—joyous energies;
 Humility—yet pride and scorn,
 Instinct and study; love and hate;
 30 Audacity—reverence. These must mate,
 And fuse with Jacob's mystic heart,
 To wrestle with the angel—Art.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

1803 - 1882

As Wordsworth's poetry is, in my judgment, the most important work done in verse, in our language, during the present century, so Emerson's Essays are, I think, the most important work done in prose.

—MATTHEW ARNOLD, "Emerson" (1883).

Great geniuses have the shortest biographies. Their cousins can tell you nothing about them. They lived in their writings, and so their house and street life was trivial and commonplace. If you would know their tastes and complexions, the most admiring of their readers most resembles them.

—EMERSON's lecture on Plato in *Representative Men* (1850).

Emerson was born in Boston on May 25, 1803—one year before Hawthorne, four before Longfellow and Whittier, and six before Holmes, Poe, Lincoln, Tennyson, and Darwin. On the paternal side he came of a long line of ministers; and in that respect there is no better representative of the Brahmin caste of New England than he. His father, William Emerson, the minister of the First Church in Boston, died in 1811, leaving the widow with a family of boys to bring up. There was something Spartan about Emerson's boyhood. The brothers did much of the house work, and the family was so poor that at times Emerson had to share an overcoat with his younger brother Edward.

An important influence was that of Emerson's unmarried aunt, Mary Moody Emerson,¹ who was determined that her nephews should attain to intellectual distinction. "My aunt," says Emerson in a sketch of her, "had an eye that went through and through you like a needle." To judge from her letters, she must have had some influence upon Emerson's prose style. Among the "high counsels" which she gave her nephew is the following: "Scorn trifles, lift your aims: do what you are afraid to do: sublimity of character must come from sublimity of motive: . . ."

After four years at the Boston Latin School, Emerson entered Harvard College at the age of fourteen. Like many a later college boy, he had to work to make his way through college. As "President's freshman," he summoned delinquents and announced to the students the faculty's orders. He also waited on the tables at commons. Although he did not distinguish himself as a student, he won the Boylston Prize of thirty dollars for declamation. He wished the prize money to be used to buy something for his mother; but it went, to his chagrin, to pay the baker's bill. The course of study at Harvard was in some respects little more advanced than

¹ For Mary Moody Emerson, see Emerson's *Works*, X, 397-433; Van Wyck Brooks, *Emerson and Others*; and Roy F. Dibble, "She Lived to Give Pain," *Century Magazine*, July, 1926.

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that of a modern preparatory school, but Emerson profited from at least three notable teachers: Edward Tyrrell Channing, who taught him English composition; George Ticknor, Longfellow's predecessor as Smith Professor of Modern Languages, and Edward Everett, Professor of Greek and later President of Harvard and Senator from Massachusetts. "Everett," wrote Emerson in 1838, "has put more stories, sentences, verses, names in amber for me than any other person." Everett, Ticknor, and Emerson's older brother William were among the first Americans to study in Germany, and they brought back with them ideas and methods which were greatly to influence New England scholarship and thinking. Emerson was graduated from Harvard in 1821 at the age of eighteen. He was pleased when chosen poet of the class, although seven others are said to have declined the honor before it was offered to him. Emerson's *Journals*, which go back to January, 1820, when he was a Junior, reveal an earnest young man doing a considerable amount of reading and thinking for himself.

For three years after graduation he taught in his brother William's school for young ladies, for there were younger brothers to be put through college. Emerson was in charge of the school one year while William was studying theology at the University of Göttingen. Teaching in a girls' school can hardly have been a congenial task for a shy youth who had grown up without sisters. One might infer as much from the poem, written at this time, which begins "Good-bye, proud world! I'm going home."

It was almost inevitable that a young man of Emerson's antecedents should go into the Unitarian ministry. If he disliked teaching, what else was there for him to do? His theological work at the Harvard Divinity School was irregular. He began preaching in 1826. Afterwards he said that if the authorities had inquired into his theological views, they would have refused him the license to preach.

Until after 1832 Emerson's health was precarious. In 1826 he went to Florida for the winter. His visit to the South had no such important influence as his trip to Europe in 1833; but he was impressed, as Bronson Alcott had been before him, with "the change and amelioration of manners" as he went southward. He was greatly interested in Achille Murat, son of Napoleon's King of Naples, then a planter in Florida. This was probably the young clergyman's first acquaintance with an intelligent and sceptical European.

In 1829 Emerson was called as minister to the Second Church in Boston. In the same year he was married to Ellen Louisa Tucker, who died two years later. Emerson's sermons are said to have been delivered in a simple, unconventional style. There were no complaints of his ministry, but a story told by his successor indicates that the young minister did not excel in certain pastoral duties. A Revolutionary veteran, to whose death-bed Emerson had been summoned, noting some hesitation or awkwardness on the minister's part, is said to have risen in wrath and exclaimed, "Young man, if you don't know your business, you had better go home." Entries in the journals make it clear that Emerson could never have been permanently happy in the ministry. Here are some of them:

"A sect or party is an elegant incognito devised to save a man from the vexation of thinking."

"It is the best part of the man, I sometimes think, that revolts most against his being a minister. His good revolts from official goodness."

"I have sometimes thought that, in order to be a good minister, it was necessary to leave the ministry. The profession is antiquated. In an altered age, we worship in the dead forms of our forefathers. Were not a Socratic paganism better than an effete, superannuated Christianity?"

The immediate occasion of Emerson's giving up his church was a disagreement with his congregation over the Lord's Supper, which the independent clergyman found himself unable to regard as a sacrament to be administered on stated occasions.

After 1832 Emerson gradually gave up preaching altogether so far as the pulpit was concerned. In a sense he never ceased to preach—it was in his blood—and he merely substituted for the pulpit the lecture platform and the printed page. It is important that those who are reading Emerson for the first time should remember that his style is that of a lecturer rather than that of a writer. This is apparent when his prose is read aloud. It is important also that the student should see that Emerson's semi-clerical language often conveys ideas which were not those of orthodox clergymen.

"The ties had long been loosening," remarks Parrington, "but it was his year abroad where he discovered ways of thinking unknown to Concord and Boston, that effectively liberalized his mind and released him from the narrow Yankee provincialisms." It was on Christmas Day, 1832, that Emerson sailed for Europe. He went partly for his health, like Irving before him; but his primary object was to see four British authors: Walter Savage Landor, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and the then little known Thomas Carlyle. He went out of his way to find Carlyle "amid desolate heathery hills" at Craigenputtock in southern Scotland. The visit marks the beginning of a notable literary friendship, which found its best expression in a remarkable series of letters extending from 1834 to 1872. Emerson paid somewhat more attention to the sights which tourists go to Europe to see than one might infer from the well-known passage in "Self-Reliance": "Travelling is a fool's paradise"; but he did not travel in the romantic and reverential mood of Irving or Longfellow. Like Hawthorne and Mark Twain, he was not to be awed. "I see no reason why I should bow my head to man, or cringe in my demeanour," he had written in his journal when a boy of twenty. In Liverpool, where he took passage for home in September, 1833, he wrote this significant review of his pilgrimage:

"I thank the Great God who has led me through this European scene, this last schoolroom in which he has pleased to instruct me, from Malta's isle, through Sicily, through Italy, through Switzerland, through France, through England, through Scotland, in safety and pleasure, and has now brought me to the shore and the ship that steers westward. He has shown me the men I wished to see,—Landor, Coleridge, Carlyle, Wordsworth; he has thereby comforted and confirmed me in my convictions. Many things I owe to the sight of these men. I shall judge more justly, less timidly, of wise men forevermore. To be sure not one of these is a mind of the very first class, but what the intercourse with each of these suggests is true of intercourse with better men, that they never *fill the ear*—fill the mind—no, it is an *idealized* portrait which always we draw of them. Upon an intelligent man, wholly a stranger to their names, they would make in conversation no deep impression, none of a world-filling fame,—they would be remembered as sensible, well-read, earnest men, not more. Especially are they all deficient, all these four,—

in different degrees, but all deficient,—in insight into religious truth. They have no idea of that species of moral truth which I call the first philosophy. . . .

“The comfort of meeting men of genius such as these is that they talk sincerely, they feel themselves to be so rich that they are above the meanness of pretending to knowledge which they have not, and they frankly tell you what puzzles them. But Carlyle—Carlyle is so amiable that I love him.”

In November, 1834, Emerson moved to Concord, where he made his home the remainder of his life. For nearly a year he lived in the Old Manse, which had been built by his grandfather, the minister who had encouraged the minute-men to fight the British in the first battle of the Revolution. Hawthorne was later to live in the Old Manse and to describe it in a well-known essay. In September, 1835, Emerson married Lydia Jackson, who at his suggestion changed her name to Lidian. After 1835 Emerson's life was outwardly uneventful. His lectures, although most of them were delivered in New England, carried him eventually as far west as Wisconsin. In 1847-1848 he lectured in England. He visited California in 1871. He was an interested spectator of the life of his time, but he took no active part in the Brook Farm experiment and only occasionally spoke in behalf of the antislavery movement. He did, however, edit the *Dial* for two years after Margaret Fuller gave it up; and he seems to have made up the deficit out of his own pocket. In 1842 he was profoundly grieved by the death of his little son, the “wondrous child” of his elegy, “Threnody.” In Concord he was intimate with Thoreau and with Bronson Alcott, the “tedious archangel” of the *Journals*. He thought highly of Hawthorne as a man, but he did not care for the latter's books. He was on familiar terms with the Boston-Cambridge writers, whom he dined with at the Saturday Club; but few of them shared his Transcendental outlook on life.

During the last decade of his life Emerson's memory began to fail him, and he soon found it difficult either to write or to lecture. In *The Americanization of Edward Bok* there is a moving picture of the aged sage whose mind had become almost a blank. Dr. Holmes, who lived to write a life of Emerson for the American Men of Letters series, has described the last occasion on which he saw Emerson. It was at Longfellow's funeral in 1882, only a month before Emerson's death. Emerson, he says, rose and looked intently at the face of the dead poet, then turned to a friend and said, “That gentleman was a sweet, beautiful soul, but I have entirely forgotten his name.” Emerson died on April 24, 1882, and was buried in the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery in Concord.

In studying Emerson it is important that the reader should have a clear conception of the man himself. Fortunately, there are many interesting accounts. In addition to the longer extract from Moncure D. Conway which is given later, the following briefer selections may help one to visualize the man. The English poet, Arthur Hugh Clough, a student at Oxford University, gives a glimpse of Emerson during his British lecture tour in 1848:

“He came to Oxford just at the end of Lent term, and stayed three days. Everybody liked him, and as the orthodox mostly had never heard of him, they did not suspect him. He is the quietest, plainest, unobtrusivest man possible; will talk, but will rarely *discourse* to more than a single person, and wholly declines ‘roaring.’ He is very Yankee to look at, lank and sallow, and not quite without the twang; but his looks and voice are pleasing nevertheless, and give you the impression of perfect intellectual cultivation, as completely as would any great scientific man

in England—Faraday or Owen, for instance, more in their way perhaps than in that of Wordsworth or Carlyle. I have been with him a great deal; for he came over to Paris and was there a month, during which time we dined together daily: and since that I have seen him often in London, and finally here [Liverpool] One thing that struck everybody is that he is much less Emersonian than his Essays. There is no dogmatism or arbitrariness about him.” (*The Prose Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough*, edited by his wife, 1881, I, 137).

An English visitor to the Northern states during the Civil War, Edward Dacey, gives a glimpse of Concord as well as Emerson, in his *Six Months in the Federal States* (1863):

“Concord has nearer and dearer claims to the thoughts of all English-speaking people than the memory of an obscure battle. It is the home of Emerson and Hawthorne. An old-fashioned, sleepy, New England village; one broad, long, rambling street of wooden houses, standing for the most part apart, and overshadowed by leafy trees; a quiet village-green or two; shady, dreamy-looking graveyards, filled with old moss-covered tombstones of colonists who lived and died subjects of the Crown of England; a rich, marshy valley, hemmed in by low-wooded hills, and a dull, lazy stream, oozing on so slowly through many turnings, that you fancy it is afraid of being carried out to the ocean that awaits it a few miles away;—these are the outward *memorabilia* of Concord. Passing through the village, you come to a roomy country-house, buried almost beneath trees, and looking the model of a quiet English parsonage, and then, entering it, it must be some fault of your own, if you are not welcome at the kindly home of Emerson.

“His is not a face or figure to which photographs can do justice. The tall spare form, the strongly-marked features, and the thin scanty hair, are all, to the English mind, typical, as it were, of that distinct American nationality, of which Mr. Emerson has been the ablest, if not the first exponent. In repose, I fancy, his prevailing expression would be somewhat grave, with a shade of sadness; but the true charm of his face can be learnt only if you hear him speaking. Then, when the ‘slow wise smile,’ as someone well called it, plays about that grim-set mouth, and the flow of those lucid sentences, so simple and yet so perfect, pours forth in calm, measured sequence, the large liquid eyes seem to kindle with a magnetic light, and you feel yourself in the presence of a living power. You may sit at his feet or not—that is a matter for your own judgment, but a Gamaliel is there. Hearing him thus speak, I understood, better than I had learnt from his writings, the influence which Mr. Emerson has wielded over the mind of America, and how Concord has become a kind of Mecca, of which the representative man of American thought is the Mahomet.”

In an essay, “Emerson the Lecturer,” James Russell Lowell has left a somewhat more favorable impression of Emerson as a lecturer than he gives in a letter, July 18, 1867, to Charles Eliot Norton:

“Emerson’s oration [before the Phi Beta Kappa Society] was more disjointed than usual, even with *him*. It began nowhere and ended everywhere, and yet, as always with that divine man, it left you feeling that something beautiful had passed that way—something more beautiful than anything else, like the rising and setting of stars. Every possible criticism might have been made on it but one—that it was

not noble. There was a tone in it that awakened all elevating associations. He boggled, he lost his place, he had to put on his glasses; but it was as if a creature from some fairer world had lost his way in our fogs, and it was *our* fault, not his. It was chaotic, but it was all such stuff as stars are made of, and you couldn't help feeling that, if you waited awhile, all that was nebulous would be whirled into planets, and would assume the mathematical gravity of system. All through it I felt something in me that cried, 'Ha, ha, to the sound of the trumpet!'

Charles Eliot Norton (1827-1908), coming back to America in 1873 with Emerson, who had visited Europe for the third and last time, wrote in his journal a long account from which the following paragraphs are taken:

"Emerson was the greatest talker in the ship's company. He talked with all men, and yet was fresh and zealous for talk at night. His serene sweetness, the pure whiteness of his soul, the reflection of his soul in his face, were never more apparent to me; but never before in intercourse with him had I been so impressed with the limits of his mind. His optimistic philosophy has hardened into a creed, with the usual effects of a creed in closing the avenues of truth. He can accept nothing as fact that tells against his dogma. His optimism becomes a bigotry, and, though of a nobler type than the common American conceit of the preeminent excellence of American things as they are, has hardly less of the quality of fatalism. To him this is the best of all possible worlds, and the best of all possible times. He refuses to believe in disorder or evil. Order is the absolute law; disorder but a phenomenon; good is absolute, evil but good in the making. . . .

"He was born with the century, and his soul received its bent from the innocent America of before 1830. He breathed in the confident, sweet, morning spirit of a time when America believed that the 4th of July, the Declaration of Independence, the common school, and the four years Presidential term, were finalities in political science and social happiness; of a time when society was simple, and comparatively innocent; when our institutions and our progress were the wonder of de Tocqueville and the Old World, and the delight of ourselves; when there were Peace Societies, and it seemed to the youth uninstructed in the past as if the Millennium were really not so very far off. His philosophy was of necessity one of hope; the gospel of prosperity; and it was settled so far as its influence on thought, action, and character were concerned, before General Jackson was chosen President and we had entered on the new and less child-like epoch of our modern democracy. . . .

"He blushed like a youth one day when I spoke to him of his influence on the men of my generation; and of its being one of the chief factors of the intellectual condition of America at the present time. He would not hearken to such a suggestion, would not admit the idea of his influence, he had done nothing to give direction to the intellectual tendencies of the nation, he had only been in sympathy with what had proved to be the prevailing national currents of thought and feeling, though at first it might have seemed as if they were partial and local. He had been very fortunate in his times." (*The Letters of Charles Eliot Norton*, I, 503 ff.).

Probably no author of Emerson's eminence ever held so low an opinion of pure literature. In 1838 he wrote in his journal: "I said to Bryant and to these young people, that the high poetry of the world from the beginning has been ethical, and it is the tendency of the ripe modern mind to produce it." Is there a single important writer of the twentieth century who

would agree with this doctrine? Emerson was not primarily a "literary" figure or a philosopher; he was what Professor W. P. Trent has termed him, "an ethical simulator," or, in Matthew Arnold's words, "the friend and aider of those who would live in the spirit." He was more of a mystic and poet than a philosopher.

Yet Emerson's hold on the modern reader is to be explained not only by the vitality of his ideas but by his literary power. His method of composition suggests why he is at his best in brief passages. He wrote down his thoughts in his journals. From his journals he took the passages that became the heart of his lectures; from the lectures and the journals grew the essays. In organization such an essay as "Self-Reliance" may be disjointed or even obscure, but the individual sentences are carefully pointed and polished. No other American has said so many fine things or made shrewder comments upon life.

The poems are more likely to give trouble to the undergraduate student than the essays or the lectures. Admirers of Emerson, however, sometimes prefer the poems to the essays, they are certainly a more compact expression of his ideas. Edwin Arlington Robinson has been quoted as expressing the opinion that Emerson is the greatest American poet. The poems should be read in the light of the essay on "The Poet"—although Emerson does not always write the kind of poetry the essay would lead us to expect. He is at his best in short passages. He wrote in his journal in 1848, "Every poem must be made up of lines that are poems." His sense of poetic form was defective. One suspects him of rationalizing when he wrote in "The Poet": "For it is not metres, but a metre-making argument, that makes a poem,—a thought so passionate and alive, that, like the spirit of a plant or an animal, it has an architecture of its own, and adorns nature with a new thing." He once remarked to J. T. Trowbridge: "I feel it a hardship that—with something of a lover's passion for what is to me the most precious thing in life, poetry—I have no gift of fluency in it, only a rude and stammering utterance." Too many of his poems are written in metrical forms that are not the best he might have chosen. After reading the "Ode to Beauty," Thoreau wrote to him: "The tune is altogether unworthy of the thoughts. You slope too quickly to the rhyme, as if that trick should be performed as soon as possible, or as if you stood over the line with a hatchet and chopped off the verses as they came out, some short and some long. But give us a long reel and we'll chop it off to suit ourselves. It sounds like parody." A just estimate of Emerson's poems appears in Longfellow's journal, December 26, 1846:

"Received from Emerson a copy of his Poems. F. [Mrs. Longfellow] read it to me all the evening and until late at night. It gave us the keenest pleasure; though many of the pieces present themselves Sphinx-like, and 'struggling to get free their hinder-parts,' offer a very bold front and challenge your answer. Throughout the volume, through the golden mist and sublimation of fancy gleam bright veins of purest poetry, like rivers running through meadows. Truly, a rare volume; with many exquisite poems in it, among which I should single out 'Monadnoc,' 'Threnody,' 'The Humble-bee,' as containing much of the quintessence of poetry."

The official biography is J. E. Cabot, *A Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (1887) in two volumes, but it is hardly a book for the beginner. There are other biographies by G. W. Cooke (1881), Moncure D. Conway (1882), Oliver Wendell Holmes (1885), Richard Garnett (1888), F. B. Sanborn (1901), George E. Woodberry (1907), and Van Wyck Brooks (1932). See also

Emerson in Concord (1889), by his son Edward W. Emerson. More illuminating than most of the biographies are *The Correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1834-1872*, edited by Charles Eliot Norton (1883), and the ten volumes of Emerson's *Journals* (1909-1914). Bliss Perry (ed.), *The Heart of Emerson's Journals* (1926) is an admirable introduction to Emerson. See also the essay on Emerson in W. C. Brownell, *American Prose Masters* (1909), Walt Whitman's "Emerson's Books (The Shadows of Them)," and Matthew Arnold's lecture, given in his *Discourses in America*. There is a usable bibliography in F. I. Carpenter, *Ralph Waldo Emerson; Representative Selections* (1934). Indispensable to the investigator is *The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (6 vols., 1939), edited by Professor Ralph L. Rusk, who is writing a life of Emerson. Among the more recent publications are: A. C. McGiffert, *Young Emerson Speaks* (1938); Townsend Scudder III, *The Lonely Wayfaring Man: Emerson and Some Englishmen* (1936); and Hubert H. Hoeltje, *Sheltering Tree: A Story of the Friendship of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Amos Bronson Alcott* (1943). For Emerson's methods as a lecturer, see W. N. Brigance (ed.), *A History and Criticism of American Public Address* (1943). See also Walter Blair and Clarence Faust, "Emerson's Literary Method," *Modern Philology*, XLIII, 79-95 (November, 1944); Harry Hayden Clark, "Emerson and Science," *Philological Quarterly*, X, 225-260 (July, 1931); and Clarence Gohdes, "A Gossip on Emerson's Treatment of Beauty," *Open Court*, XLV, 315-320 (May, 1931). F. O. Matthiessen, *American Renaissance* (1941), contains an excellent study of Emerson's writings. Kenneth W. Cameron (ed.), *Emerson the Essayist* (2 vols., 1945), reprints much material which influenced the development of Emerson's thought. Further references may be found in Lewis Leary (ed.), *Articles on American Literature . . .* (1947).

[Emerson]*

from AUTOBIOGRAPHY: MEMORIES
AND EXPERIENCES (1904)

MONCURE DANIEL CONWAY (1832-1907)

In 1850, Conway, a young Virginian law student of literary tastes, happened to read an article on Emerson which profoundly influenced him. A crisis in his inner life sent him first into the Methodist ministry and later to Cambridge, Mass., where, while attending the Harvard Divinity School, he met Emerson in 1853.

An illness in April [1850] was followed by a return to Falmouth for a few weeks, and there I entered upon a spiritual crisis of whose import I was long unconscious. One bright morning I took up my old flintlock gun and wandered down the left bank of the Rappahannock. In earlier years I had been fond of shooting, but had not touched a gun for nearly two years, and

perhaps took it on this occasion to try and revive in myself some of the boyish spirit that had left me. For I was listless and unhappy. I had begun to feel a repugnance to the idea of being a county lawyer, and was interested only in literature. With my flintlock I took along an old volume of "Blackwood's Magazine." At the top of the first hill below Falmouth, and about half-way to the old mansion called "Chatham," there is near the road a pretty spring, from which I drank, with a folded leaf for my cup, and sat down to look at the scenery. The road was little used, and I was rather startled by some rustling in the bushes. Two mulatto children had come to get water in their cans,—a boy and a girl of seven or eight years,—and, as befitted the warm day and their Arcadian age, both entirely naked. Adam and Eve could not have been more unconscious than these pretty statuettes of yellow bronze. I talked with them a little, found them rather bright, and, when they had disappeared,

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meditated more deeply than ever before on the condition of their race in America

I then turned to my "Blackwood." In the number for December, 1847, the first article was entitled "Emerson,"—a name previously unknown to me. The very first extract—it was from Emerson's essay on History—fixed itself in me like an arrow:—

It is remarkable that involuntarily we always read as superior beings. Universal history, the poets, the romancers, do not in their statehest pictures—in the sacerdotal, the imperial palaces, in the triumphs of will or of genius—anywhere lose our ear, anywhere make us feel that we intrude, that this is for better men, but rather is it true, that in their grandest strokes we feel most at home. All that Shakespeare says of the king, yonder slip of a boy that reads in the corner feels to be true of himself.

Precisely what there was in these words to influence my life I cannot say. I have a vague remembrance of sitting there beside the spring a long time meditating on Emerson's use of the phrase "true of himself." What "self" was this? Clearly not the same as "soul," with which I was so familiar.

Whatever may have been the questionings, some revelation there was. A spiritual crisis, as I have said,—though it concerned only myself. Through a little rift I caught a glimpse of a vault beyond the familiar sky, from which flowed a spirit that was subtly imbreeding discontent in me, bereaving me of faith in myself, rendering me a source of anxiety to those around me. And what was I doing out there with a gun trying to kill happy creatures of earth and sky? Was it for this I was born?

There is a legend that old Governor Spotswood, wishing to introduce the English skylark into Virginia, brought over a shipload of them and set them free in our meadows. I had heard it talked of in my childhood, and one day felt sure that I heard the notes of a marvellous bird and saw it ascending toward the sky. My story raised a smile when I told it at home, and I had to agree that no skylark survived from those brought over nearly a hundred and fifty years before. But it was no fancy that now in my maturer life Emerson had set free in my heart a winged thought that sang a new song and soared—whither?

May 3, 1853, is a date under which I wrote a couplet from Emerson's "Woodnotes,"—

*'Twas one of the charmed days
When the genius of God doth flow.*

—for on that day I first met Emerson. Dr. Palfrey, on finding in our conversations that it was Emerson who had touched me in my sleep in Virginia, advised me to visit him. I felt shy about invading the "spot that is sacred to thought and God," but he urged me to go and gave me a letter to Emerson. I knew too well the importance of a morning to go straight to Emerson's house, and inquired the way to the Old Manse. It was a fortunate excursion. The man I most wished to meet was Emerson, the man I most wished to see was Hawthorne. He no longer resided at the Old Manse, but as I was gazing from the road down the archway of ash-trees at the house whose "mosses" his genius had made spiritual moss-roses, out stepped the magician himself. It has been a conceit of mine that I had never seen a portrait of Hawthorne, but recognized him as one I had seen in dreams he had evoked. At any rate, I knew it was my Prospero. Who else could have those soft-flashing unsearchable eyes, that *beauté du diable* at middle age? ---

I felt so timid about calling on Emerson—it appeared such a one-sided affair—that I once turned my steps toward the railway station. But soon after twelve I knocked at Emerson's door, and sent in Dr. Palfrey's letter, with a request that I might call on him during the afternoon. The children came to say that their father was out, but would return to dinner at one, and their mother wished me to remain. The three children entertained me pleasantly, mainly in the bower that [Bronson] Alcott had built in the front garden. I was presently sent for.

Emerson met me at the front door, welcome beaming in his eyes, and took me into his library. He remembered receiving a letter from me two or three years before. On learning that I was at the Divinity School and had come to Concord simply to see him, he called from his library door, "Queenyl!" Mrs. Emerson came, and I was invited to remain some days. I had, however, to return to college that evening, and though I begged that his day should not be long interfered with, he insisted on my passing the afternoon with him. When we were alone, Emerson inquired about the experiences that had led me away

from my Methodism, and about my friendships "The gods," he said, "generally provide the young thinker with friends." When I told him how deeply words of his, met by chance in an English magazine, had moved me while I was a law student in Virginia, he said, "When the mind has reached a certain stage it may be sometimes crystallized by a slight touch" I had so little realized their import, I told him that they only resulted in leading me to leave the law for the Methodist ministry. It had been among the Hicksite Quakers that I found sympathetic friends, after entering on the path of inquiry. He then began to talk about the Quakers and their inner light. He had formed a near friendship with Mary Rotch of New Bedford. "Mary Rotch told us that her little girl one day asked if she might do something. She replied, 'What does the voice in thee say?' The child went off, and after a time returned to say, 'Mother, the little voice says, no.' That," said Emerson, "starts the tears to one's eyes."

He especially respected the Quaker faith that every "scripture" must be held subject to the reader's inner light. "I am accustomed to find errors in writings of the great men, and it is an impertinence to demand that I shall recognize none in some particular volume." - - -

The dinner was early; the children were with us, and the talk was the most homelike and merry that I had known for a long time. When the children were gone Mrs. Emerson told me that they had been christened. "Husband was not willing the children should be christened in the formal way, but said he would offer no objection when I could find a minister as pure and good as the children. That was reasonable, and we waited some time; but when William Henry Channing came on a visit to us, we agreed that he was good enough to christen our children."

While Emerson was preparing for the walk, I looked about the library. Over the mantel hung a large copy of Michael Angelo's "Parcæ"; there were two statuettes of Goethe, of whom also there was an engraved portrait on the wall. Afterwards Emerson showed me a collection of portraits—Shakespeare, Dante, Montaigne, Goethe, and Swedenborg. The furniture of the room was rather antique and simple. There were four long shelves completely occupied, he said, by his MSS., of which there must have been enough to furnish a score of printed volumes.

Our walk was around Walden Pond, on both sides of which Emerson owned land. Our conversation related to the religious ferment of the time. He said that the Unitarian churches were stated to be no longer producing ministers equal to their forerunners, but were more and more finding their best men in those coming from the orthodox churches. That was a symptom. Those from other churches, having gone through experiences and reached personal convictions strong enough to break with their past, would of course have some enthusiasm for their new faith. But the Unitarians might take note of that intimation that individual growth and experience are essential for the religious teacher. I mentioned Theodore Parker, and he said, "It is a comfort to remember that there is one sane voice amid the religious and political affairs of the country." I said that I could not understand how I could have tolerated those dogmas of inherited depravity, blood atonement, eternal damnation for Adam's sin, and the rest. He said, "I cannot feel interested in Christianity; it seems deplorable that there should be a tendency to creeds that would take men back to the chimpanzee." He smiled at the importance ascribed to academic terms. "I have very good grounds for being Unitarian and Trinitarian too; I need not nibble at one loaf forever, but eat it and go on to earn another." He said that while he could not personally attend any church, he held a pew in the Unitarian church for his wife and children who desired it, and indeed would in any case support the minister, because it is well "to have a conscientious man to sit on school committees, to help at town meetings, to attend the sick and the dead."

As we were walking through the woods he remarked that the voices of some fishermen out on the water, talking about their affairs, were intoned by the distance and the water into music; and that the curves which their oars made, marked under the sunlight in silver, made a succession of beautiful bows. This may have started a train of thought related to the abhorrence I had expressed of the old dogmas, to which I had added something about the Methodist repugnance with which I had witnessed some Catholic ceremonies. "Yet," he said, "they possess beauty in the distance. When one sees them on the stage,—processions of priests in their vestments chanting their hymns at the opera,—they are in their place, and offend no sentiment."

I mentioned a task set me at the Divinity School, to write an essay on Eschatology, and Emerson said, "An actually existent fly is more important than a possibly existent angel." Again presently: "The old artist said, *Pingo in eternitatem*,¹ this *eternitatem* for which I paint is not in past or future, but is the height of every living hour."

When we were in a byway among the bushes, Emerson suddenly stopped and exclaimed, "Ah! there is one of the gods of the wood!" I looked and saw nothing, then turned to him and followed his glance, but still beheld nothing unusual. He was looking along the path before us through a thicket "Where?" I asked. "Did you see it?" he said, now moving on. "No, I saw nothing—what was it?" "No matter," said he gently I repeated my question, but he still said smilingly, "Never mind, if you did not see it." I was a little piqued, but said no more, and very soon was listening to talk that made my Eschatology seem ridiculous. Perhaps the sylvan god I had missed was a pretty snake, a squirrel, or other little note in the symphony of nature.

My instruction in the supremacy of the present hour began not so much in Emerson's words as in himself. Standing beside the ruin of the shanty Thoreau built with his own hands, and lived in for a year at a cost of twenty-eight dollars, twelve and a half cents, Emerson appeared an incarnation of the wondrous day he was giving me. - - -

That evening I sat in my room in Divinity Hall (No. 34) as one enriched, and wrote: "May 3. The most memorable day of my life: spent with Ralph Waldo Emerson!"

from EMERSON'S JOURNALS*

(1909-1914)

CANTERBURY [1824]

- - - There is another sort of book which appears now and then in the world, once in two or three centuries perhaps, and which soon or late gets a foothold in popular esteem. I allude to those books which collect and embody the wisdom of their times, and so mark the stages of human improvement. Such are the Proverbs

¹ "I paint for eternity."

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of Solomon, the Essays of Montaigne, and eminently the Essays of Bacon. Such also (though in my judgment in far less degree) is the proper merit of Mr. Pope's judicious poems, the Moral Essays and Essay on Man, which, without originality, seize upon all the popular speculations floating among sensible men and give them in a compact graceful form to the following age. I should like to add another volume to this valuable work. I am not so foolhardy as to write *Sequel to Bacon* on my title-page; and there are some reasons that induce me to suppose that the undertaking of this enterprise does not imply any censurable arrogance - - -

CAMBRIDGE, September 28 [1826]

- - - I was born cold. My bodily habit is cold. I shiver in and out; don't heat to the good purposes called enthusiasm a quarter so quick and kindly as my neighbors. - - -

CAMBRIDGE [1828]

It is a peculiarity (I find by observation upon others) of humour in me, my strong propensity for strolling I deliberately shut up my books in a cloudy June noon, put on my old clothes and old hat and slink away to the whortleberry bushes and slip with the greatest satisfaction into a little cowpath where I am sure I can defy observation. This point gained, I solace myself for hours with picking blueberries and other trash of the woods, far from fame, behind the birch-trees. I seldom enjoy hours as I do these. I remember them in winter; I expect them in spring. I do not know a creature that I think has the same humour, or would think it respectable. - - -

BROOKLINE, August 18 [1830]

The sun shines and warms and lights us and we have no curiosity to know why this is so; but we ask the reason of all evil, of pain, and hunger, and mosquitoes and silly people.

AT SEA, January 2, 1833.

Sailed from Boston for Malta, December 25, 1832, in Brig Jasper, Captain Ellis, 236 tons, laden with logwood, mahogany, tobacco, sugar, coffee, beeswax, cheese, etc. A long storm from the second morn of our departure consigned all the five passengers to the irremedial chagrins of the stateroom, to wit, nausea, darkness, unrest, uncleanness, harpy appetite and harpy

feeding, the ugly "sound of water in mine ears," anticipations of going to the bottom, and the treasures of the memory I remembered up nearly the whole of *Lycidas*, clause by clause, here a verse and there a word, as Isis in the fable the broken body of Osiris.

NEWTON, *October 20* [1833]

God defend me from ever looking at a man as an animal. God defend me from the vice of my constitution, an excessive desire of sympathy.

NEWTON, *April 12* [1834]

All the mistakes I make arise from forsaking my own station and trying to see the object from another person's point of view.

NEWTON, *June 18* [1834]

Webster's speeches seem to be the utmost that the unpoetic West has accomplished or can. We all lean on England, scarce a verse, a page, a newspaper, but is writ in imitation of English forms; our very manners and conversation are traditional, and sometimes the life seems dying out of all literature, and this enormous paper currency of Words is accepted instead. I suppose the evil may be cured by this rank rabble party, the Jacksonism of the country, heedless of English and of all literature—a stone cut out of the ground without hands;—they may root out the hollow dilettantism of our cultivation in the coarsest way, and the newborn may begin again to frame their own world with greater advantage.

August 27 [1836]

To-day came to me the first proof-sheet of *Nature* to be corrected, like a new coat, full of vexations; with the first sentences of the chapters perched like mottoes aloft in small type! The peace of an author cannot be wounded by such trifles, if he sees that the sentences are still good. A good sentence can never be put out of countenance by any blunder of compositors.

September 28 [1836]

Why is there no genius in the Fine Arts in this country?

In sculpture Greenough is picturesque; in painting, Allston; in Poetry, Bryant; in Eloquence, Channing; in Architecture, —; in Fiction, Irving, Cooper; in all, feminine; no character.

• 770 •

1st reason: Influence of Europe, mainly of England. - - -

2nd reason. They are not called out by the necessity of the people. Poetry, music, sculpture, painting were all enlisted in the service of Patriotism and Religion. The statue was to be worshipped, the picture also. The poem was a confession of faith. A vital faith built the cathedrals of Europe. But who cares to see a poem of Bryant's, or a statue of Greenough, or a picture of Allston? The people never see them. The mind of the race has taken another direction,—Property.

April 22 [1837]

Cold April; hard times, men breaking who ought not to break; banks bullied into the bolstering of desperate speculators; all the newspapers a chorus of owls.

October 18 [1837]

One of the last secrets we learn as scholars is to confide in our own impressions of a book. If Æschylus is that man he is taken for, he has not yet done his office when he has educated the learned of Europe for a thousand years. He is now to approve himself a master of delight to me. If he cannot do that, all his fame shall avail him nothing. I were a fool not to sacrifice a thousand Æschyluses to my intellectual integrity.

April 1 [1838]

Cool or cold, windy, clear day. The Divinity School youths wish to talk with me concerning Theism. I went rather heavy-hearted, for I always find that my views chill or shock people at the first opening. But the conversation went well and I came away cheered. I told them that the preacher should be a poet smit with love of the harmonies of moral nature;—and yet look at the Unitarian Association and see if its aspect is poetic. They all smiled No. A minister nowadays is plainest prose, the prose of prose. He is a warming-pan, a night-chair at sickbeds and rheumatic souls; and the fire of the minstrel's eye and the vivacity of his word is exchanged for intense, grumbling enunciation of the Cambridge sort, and for Scripture phraseology.

June 13 [1838]

The unbelief of the age is attested by the loud condemnation of trifles. Look at our silly re-

ligious papers Let a minister wear a cane, or a white hat, go to a theatre, or avoid a Sunday School, let a school-book with a Calvinistic sentence or a Sunday School book without one be heard of, and instantly all the old grannies squeak and gibber and do what they call "sounding an alarm," from Bangor to Mobile. Alike nice and squeamish is its ear. You must on no account say "stink" or "Damn."

August 18 [1838]

Dr. Ripley prays for rain with great explicitness on Sunday, and on Monday the showers fell When I spoke of the speed with which his prayers were answered, the good man looked modest.

May 23 [1839]

A College.—My College should have Allston, Greenough, Bryant, Irving, Webster, Alcott, summoned for its domestic professors. And if I must send abroad (and, if we send for dancers and singers and actors, why not at the same prices for scholars?), Carlyle, Hallam, Campbell, should come and read lectures on History, Poetry, Letters. I would bid my men come for the love of God and man, promising them an open field and a boundless opportunity, and they should make their own terms. Then I would open my lecture rooms to the wide nation; and they should pay, each man, a fee that should give my professor a remuneration fit and noble. Then I should see the lecture-room, the college, filled with life and hope. Students would come from afar; for who would not ride a hundred miles to hear some one of these men giving his selectest thoughts to those who received them with joy? I should see living learning; the Muse once more in the eye and cheek of the youth.

April 7 [1840]

In all my lectures, I have taught one doctrine, namely, the infinitude of the private man¹. This

¹ On July 4, 1847, Emerson wrote to Harrison Gray Otis Blake: "These two facts—that our selves are somebodies, & may be relied on as good for some performance, and then that our private roots run down into the great Perfection;—if trite & truistical—are still the two articles of my creed, and they both certainly furnish the just basis for the doctrine of inspiration, and for every other piece of courage and forwardness" (Rusk, *Letters of . . . Emerson*, III, 405).

the people accept readily enough, and even with loud commendation, as long as I call the lecture Art, or Politics, or Literature, or the Household; but the moment I call it Religion, they are shocked, though it be only the application of the same truth which they receive everywhere else, to a new class of facts.

June 24 [1840]

Montaigne—The language of the street is always strong What can describe the folly and emptiness of scolding like the word *jawing*? I feel too the force of the double negative, though clean contrary to our grammar rules. And I confess to some pleasure from the stinging rhetoric of a rattling oath in the mouth of truckmen and teamsters How laconic and brisk it is by the side of a page of the *North American Review* Cut these words and they would bleed; they are vascular and alive; they walk and run. Moreover they who speak them have this elegance, that they do not trip in their speech. It is a shower of bullets, whilst Cambridge men and Yale men correct themselves and begin again at every half sentence.

I know nobody among my contemporaries except Carlyle who writes with any sinew and vivacity comparable to Plutarch and Montaigne. Yet always this profane swearing and bar-room wit has salt and fire in it. I cannot now read Webster's speeches. Fuller and Browne and Milton are quick, but the list is soon ended. Goethe seems to be well alive, no pedant. Luther too.

October 17 [1840]

Yesterday George and Sophia Ripley, Margaret Fuller and Alcott discussed here the Social Plans [Brook Farm]. I wished to be convinced, to be thawed, to be made nobly mad by the kindling before my eye of a new dawn of human piety. But this scheme was arithmetic and comfort: this was a hint borrowed from the Tremont House and the United States Hotel; a rage in our poverty and politics to live rich and gentlemanlike, an anchor to leeward against a change of weather; a prudent forecast on the probable issue of the great questions of Pauperism and Poverty. And not once could I be inflamed, but sat aloof and thoughtless; my voice faltered and fell. It was not the cave of persecution which is the palace of spiritual power, but only a room

in the Astor House hired for the Transcendentalists. I do not wish to remove from my present prison to a prison a little larger I wish to break all prisons. I have not yet conquered my own house It irks and repents me. Shall I raise the siege of this hencoop, and march baffled away to a pretended siege of Babylon? It seems to me that so to do were to dodge the problem I am set to solve, and to hide my impotency in the thick of a crowd. I can see too, afar,—that I should not find myself more than now,—no, not so much, in that select, but not by me selected, fraternity. Moreover, to join this body would be to traverse all my long trumpeted theory, and the instinct which spoke from it, that one man is a counterpoise to a city,—that a man is stronger than a city, that his solitude is more prevalent and beneficent than the concert of crowds.

January 31 [1841]

All my thoughts are foresters. I have scarce a day-dream on which the breath of the pines has not blown, and their shadows waved. Shall I not then call my little book Forest Essays?

March 20 [1842]

The *Dial* is to be sustained or ended, and I must settle the question, it seems, of its life or death. I wish it to live, but do not wish to be its life. Neither do I like to put it in the hands of the Humanity and Reform Men, because they trample on letters and poetry; nor in the hands of the Scholars, for they are dead and dry.

September 1 [1842]

I have so little vital force that I could not stand the dissipation of a flowing and friendly life; I should die of consumption in three months. But now I husband all my strength in this bachelor life I lead; no doubt shall be a well-preserved old gentleman.

November 26 [1842]

This old Bible, if you pitch it out of the window with a fork, it comes bouncing back again.

March [1843]

It is not in the power of God to make a communication of his will to a Calvinist. For to every inward revelation he holds up his silly book, and quotes chapter and verse against the

Book-Maker and Man-Maker, against that which quotes not, but is and cometh There is a light older than intellect, by which the intellect lives and works, always new, and which degrades every past and particular shining of itself. This light, Calvinism denies, in its idolatry of a certain past shining.

August 25 [1843]

Henry Thoreau sends me a paper with the old fault of unlimited contradiction. The trick of his rhetoric is soon learned. it consists in substituting for the obvious word and thought its diametrical antagonist. He praises wild mountains and winter forests for their domestic air; snow and ice for their warmth; villagers and wood-choppers for their urbanity, and the wilderness for resembling Rome and Paris. - - -

December 31 [1843]

We rail at trade, but the historian of the world will see that it was the principle of liberty; that it settled America, and destroyed feudalism, and made peace and keeps peace; that it will abolish slavery.

May [1845]

I avoid the Stygian anniversaries at Cambridge, those hurrahs among the ghosts, those yellow, bald, toothless meetings in memory of red cheeks, black hair, and departed health.

June [1845]

One who wishes to refresh himself by contact with the bone and sinew of society must avoid what is called the respectable portion of his city or neighborhood with as much care as in Europe a good traveller avoids American and English people.

March [1846]

I like man, but not men.

April [1847]

I believe in Omnipresence and find footsteps in grammar rules, in oyster shops, in church liturgies, in mathematics, and in solitudes and in galaxies. I am shamed out of my declamations against churches by the wonderful beauty of the English liturgy, an anthology of the piety of ages and nations.

August [1847]

The Superstitions of our Age.

The fear of Catholicism;

The fear of pauperism;

The fear of immigration;

The fear of manufacturing interests;

The fear of radicalism or democracy;

And faith in the steam engine.

LONDON, April [1848]

People here expect a revolution. There will be no revolution, none that deserves to be called so. There may be a scramble for money. But as all the people we see want the things we now have, and not better things, it is very certain that they will, under whatever change of forms, keep the old system. When I see changed men, I shall look for a changed world. Whoever is skilful in heaping money now will be skilful in heaping money again.

September 10 [1848]

George Sand is a great genius, and yet owes to her birth in France her entire freedom from the cant and snuffle of our dead Christianity.

January [1850]

Love is temporary and ends with marriage. Marriage is the perfection which love aimed at, ignorant of what it sought. Marriage is a good known only to the parties,—a relation of perfect understanding, aid, contentment, possession of themselves and of the world,—which dwarfs love to green fruit.

July [1853]

'Tis curious that Christianity, which is idealism, is sturdily defended by the brokers, and steadily attacked by the idealists.

August [1853]

If Socrates were here, we could go and talk with him; but Longfellow, we cannot go and talk with; there is a palace, and servants, and a row of bottles of different coloured wines, and wine glasses, and fine coats.

May [1854]

If Minerva offered me a gift and an option, I would say give me continuity. I am tired of scraps. I do not wish to be a literary or intellectual chiffonier. Away with this Jew's rag-bag of

ends and tufts of brocade, velvet, and cloth-of-gold, let me spin some yards or miles of helpful twine, a clew to lead to one kingly truth, a cord to bind wholesome and belonging facts.

July [1855]

--- if the women demand votes, offices, political equality, as an Elder and Elderess are of equal power in the Shaker Families, refuse it not. 'Tis very cheap wit that finds it so funny. Certainly all my points would be sooner carried in the state if women voted.

July [1855]

Sleepy Hollow. The blazing evidence of immortality is our dissatisfaction with any other solution.

April (?) [1859]

I have been writing and speaking what were once called novelties, for twenty-five or thirty years, and have not now one disciple. Why? Not that what I said was not true; not that it has not found intelligent receivers; but because it did not go from any wish in me to bring men to me, but to themselves. I delight in driving them from me. What could I do, if they came to me?—they would interrupt and encumber me. This is my boast that I have no school follower. I should account it a measure of the impurity of insight, if it did not create independence.

March [1862]

Why has never the poorest country college offered me a professorship of rhetoric? I think I could have taught an orator, though I am none.

CONCORD, February 13, 1865

Home from Chicago and Milwaukee. Chicago grows so fast that one ceases to respect civic growth: as if all these solid and stately squares which we are wont to see as the slow growth of a century had come to be done by machinery as cloth and hardware are made, and were therefore shoddy architecture without honour.

'Twas tedious, the squalor and obstructions of travel; the advantage of their offers at Chicago made it necessary to go; in short, this dragging of a decorous old gentleman out of home and out of position to this juvenile career was tantamount to this,—"I'll bet you fifty dollars a day that you will not leave your library, and wade

and ride and run and suffer all manner of indignities and stand up for an hour each night reading in a hall"; and I answered, "I'll bet I will." I do it and win the \$900.

November 5 [1865]

We hoped that in the peace, after such a war, a great expansion would follow in the mind of the Country; grand views in every direction,—true freedom in politics, in religion, in social science, in thought. But the energy of the nation seems to have expended itself in the war, and every interest is found as sectional and timorous as before. . . .

BOSTON, PARKER HOUSE,

Monday night, November [1874]

The secret of poetry is never explained,—is always new. We have not got farther than mere wonder at the delicacy of the touch, and the eternity it inherits.

[First Visit to Carlyle]

from EMERSON'S ENGLISH TRAITS
(1856)

From Edinburgh I went to the Highlands. On my return I came from Glasgow to Dumfries, and being intent on delivering a letter which I had brought from Rome, inquired for Craigenputtock. It was a farm in Nithsdale, in the parish of Dunscore, sixteen miles distant. No public coach passed near it, so I took a private carriage from the inn. I found the house amid desolate heathery hills, where the lonely scholar nourished his mighty heart. Carlyle was a man from his youth, an author who did not need to hide from his readers, and as absolute a man of the world, unknown and exiled on that hill-farm, as if holding on his own terms what is best in London. He was tall and gaunt, with a cliff-like brow, self-possessed and holding his extraordinary powers of conversation in easy command; clinging to his northern accent with evident relish; full of lively anecdote, and with a streaming humor which floated everything he looked upon. His talk, playfully exalting the most familiar objects, put the companion at once into an acquaintance with his Lars and Lemurs, and it was very pleasant to learn what was predestined to be a pretty mythology. Few were the

objects and lonely the man, "not a person to speak to within sixteen miles, except the minister of Dunscore"; so that books inevitably made his topics. - - -

5 We went out to walk over long hills, and looked at Criffel, then without his cap, and down into Wordsworth's country. There we sat down and talked of the immortality of the soul. It was not Carlyle's fault that we talked on that topic, for he has the natural disinclination of every nimble spirit to bruise itself against walls, and did not like to place himself where no step can be taken. But he was honest and true, and cognizant of the subtle links that bind
10 ages together, and saw how every event affects all the future. "Christ died on the tree: that built Dunscore kirk yonder: that brought you and me together. Time has only a relative existence."

He was already turning his eyes towards London with a scholar's appreciation. London is the heart of the world, he said, wonderful only from the mass of human beings. He liked the huge machine. Each keeps its own round. The baker's boy brings muffins to the window at a fixed hour every day, and that is all the Londoner
20 knows or wishes to know on the subject. But it turned out good men. He named certain individuals, especially one man of letters, his friend, the best mind he knew, whom London had well served.
25

from THE CORRESPONDENCE OF
THOMAS CARLYLE AND RALPH
35 WALDO EMERSON, 1834-1872
(1883)

THOMAS CARLYLE TO HIS MOTHER

[August 1833]

40 Three little happinesses have befallen us: - - - Our third happiness was the arrival of a certain young unknown friend, named Emerson, from Boston, in the United States, who turned aside so far from his British, French, and Italian travels to see me here! He had an introduction from Mill, and a Frenchman (Baron d'Eichthal's nephew) whom John¹ knew at Rome. Of course we could do no other than welcome him; the rather as he seemed to be one of the most lovable
45 creatures in himself we had ever looked on. He
50

¹ Carlyle's brother.

stayed till next day with us, and talked and heard talk to his heart's content, and left us all really sad to part with him. Jane says it is the first journey since Noah's Deluge undertaken to Craigenputtock for such a purpose. In any case, we had a cheerful day from it, and ought to be thankful.

EMERSON TO CARLYLE

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, 14 May, 1834

MY DEAR SIR,—There are some purposes we delay long to execute simply because we have them more at heart than others, and such an one has been for many weeks, I may say months, my design of writing you an epistle.

Some chance wind of Fame blew your name to me, perhaps two years ago, as the author of papers which I had already distinguished (as indeed it was very easy to do) from the mass of English periodical criticism as by far the most original and profound essays of the day,—the works of a man of Faith as well as Intellect, sportive as well as learned, and who, belonging to the despairing and deriding class of philosophers, was not ashamed to hope and to speak sincerely. Like somebody in *Wilhelm Meister*, I said: This person has come under obligations to me and to all whom he has enlightened. He knows not how deeply I should grieve at his fall, if, in that exposed England where genius always hears the Devil's whisper, "All these kingdoms will I give thee," his virtue also should be an initial growth put off with age. When therefore I found myself in Europe, I went to your house only to say, "Faint not,—the word you utter is heard, though in the ends of the earth and by humblest men; it works, prevails." Drawn by strong regard to one of my teachers I went to see his person, and as he might say his environment at Craigenputtock. Yet it was to fulfil my duty, finish my mission, not with much hope of gratifying him,—in the spirit of "If I love you, what is that to you?" Well, it happened to me that I was delighted with my visit, justified to myself in my respect, and many a time upon the sea in my homeward voyage I remembered with joy the favored condition of my lonely philosopher, his happiest wedlock, his fortunate temper, his steadfast simplicity, his all means of happiness;—not that I had the remotest hope that he should so far depart from his theories as to expect

happiness. On my arrival home I rehearsed to several attentive ears what I had seen and heard, and they with joy received it.

In Liverpool I wrote to Mr. Fraser to send me his Magazine, and I have now received four numbers of the *Sartor Resartus*, for whose light thanks evermore. I am glad that one living scholar is self-centred, and will be true to himself though none ever were before; who, as Montaigne says, "puts his ear close by himself, and holds his breath and listens." And none can be offended with the self-subsistency of one so catholic and jocund. And 'tis good to have a new eye inspect our mouldy social forms, our politics, and schools, and religion. I say *our*, for it cannot have escaped you that a lecture upon these topics written for England may be read in America. Evermore thanks for the brave stand you have made for Spiritualism in these writings. But has literature any parallel to the oddity of the vehicle chosen to convey this treasure? I delight in the contents; the form, which my defective apprehension for a joke makes me not appreciate, I leave to your merry discretion. And yet did ever wise and philanthropic author use so defying a diction? As if society were not sufficiently shy of truth without providing it beforehand with an objection to the form. Can it be that this humor proceeds from a despair of finding a contemporary audience, and so the Prophet feels at liberty to utter his message in droll sounds. Did you not tell me, Mr. Thomas Carlyle, sitting upon your broad hills, that it was Jesus Christ built Dunscore kirk yonder? If you love such sequences, then admit, as you will, that no poet is sent into the world before his time; that all the departed thinkers and actors have paved your way; that (at least when you surrender yourself) nations and ages do guide your pen, yes, and common goose-quills as well as your diamond graver. Believe then that harp and ear are formed by one revolution of the wheel; that men are waiting to hear your epical song; and so be pleased to skip those excursive involved glees, and give us the simple air, without the volley of variations. At least in some of your prefaces you should give us the theory of your rhetoric. I comprehend not why you should lavish in that spendthrift style of yours celestial truths. Bacon and Plato have something too solid to say than that they can afford to be humorists. You are dispensing that

which is rarest, namely, the simplest truths,—truths which lie next to consciousness, and which only the Platos and Goethes perceive. I look for the hour with impatience when the vehicle will be worthy of the spirit,—when the word will be as simple, and as resistless, as the thought,—and, in short, when your words will be one with things. I have no hope that you will find suddenly a large audience. Says not the sarcasm, “Truth hath the plague in his house”? Yet all men are *potentially* (as Mr. Coleridge would say) your audience, and if you will not in very Mephistophelism repel and defy them, shall be actually; and whatever the great or the small may say about the charm of diabolism, a true and majestic genius can afford to despise it.

I venture to amuse you with this homiletic criticism because it is the sense of uncritical truth-seekers, to whom you are no more than Hecuba, whose instincts assure them that there is Wisdom in this grotesque Teutonic apocalyptic strain of yours, but that ‘t is hence hindered in its effect. And though with all my heart I would stand well with my Poet, yet if I offend I shall quietly retreat into my universal relations, wherefrom I affectionately espy you as a man, myself as another.

And yet before I come to the end of my letter I may repent of my temerity and unsay my charge. For are not all our circlets of will as so many little eddies rounded in by the great Circle of Necessity, and *could* the Truth-speaker, perhaps now the best Thinker of the Saxon race, have written otherwise? And must we not say that Drunkenness is a virtue rather than that Cato has erred? - -

CARLYLE TO EMERSON

5 CHEYNE ROW, CHELSEA, LONDON,
13 February, 1837.

Your little azure-colored *Nature* gave me true satisfaction. I read it, and then lent it about to all my acquaintance that had a sense for such things; from whom a similar verdict always came back. You say it is the first chapter of something greater. I call it rather the Foundation and Ground-plan on which you may build whatsoever of great and true has been given you to build. It is the true Apocalypse, this when the “Open Secret” becomes revealed to a man. I re-

joice much in the glad serenity of soul with which you look out on this wondrous Dwelling-place of yours and mine,—with an ear for *Ewigen Melodien*,² which pipe in the winds round us, and utter themselves forth in all sounds and sights and things: *not* to be written down by gamut-machinery; but which all right writing is a kind of attempt to write down. You will see what the years will bring you. It is not one of your smallest qualities in my mind, that you *can* wait so quietly and let the years do their best. He that cannot keep himself quiet is of a morbid nature; and the thing he yields us will be like him in that, whatever else it be.

EMERSON TO CARLYLE

CONCORD, 10 May, 1838.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Yesterday I had your letter of March. It quickens my purpose (always all but ripe) to write to you. If it had come earlier I should have been confirmed in my original purpose of publishing *Select Miscellanies of T. C.* As it is, we are far on in the printing of the first two volumes (to make 600 pages) of the papers as they stand in your list. And now I find we shall only get as far as the seventeenth or eighteenth article. I regret it, because this book will not embrace those papers I chiefly desire to provide people with, and it may be some time, in these years of bankruptcy and famine, before we shall think it prudent to publish two volumes more. But Loring is a good man, and thinks that many desire to see the sources of Nile. I, for my part, fancy that to meet the taste of the readers we should publish *from the last* backwards, beginning with the paper on Scott, which has had the best reception ever known. Carlyleism is becoming so fashionable that the most austere Seniors are glad to qualify their reprobation by applauding this review. I have agreed with the bookseller publishing the *Miscellanies* that he is to guarantee to you one dollar on every copy he sells; and you are to have the total profit on every copy subscribed for. The retail price [is] to be \$2.50. The cost of the work is not yet precisely ascertained. The work will probably appear in six or seven weeks. We print one thousand copies. So whenever it is sold you shall have one thousand dollars. - -

² Eternal melodies.

But a better device would be, that you should embark in the "Victoria" steamer, and come in a fortnight to New York, and in twenty-four hours more to Concord. Your study arm-chair, fireplace, and bed, long vacant, auguring expect you. Then you shall revise your proofs and dictate wit and learning to the New World. Think of it in good earnest. In aid of your friendliest purpose, I will set down some of the facts. I occupy, or *improve*, as we Yankees say, two acres only of God's earth; on which is my house, my kitchen-garden, my orchard of thirty young trees, my empty barn. My house is now a very good one for comfort, and abounding in room. Besides my house, I have, I believe, \$22,000, whose income in ordinary years is six per cent. I have no other tithe or glebe except the income of my winter lectures, which was last winter \$800. Well, with this income, here at home, I am a rich man. I stay at home and go abroad at my own instance. I have food, warmth, leisure, books, friends. Go away from home, I am rich no longer. I never have a dollar to spend on a fancy. As no wise man, I suppose, ever was rich in the sense of *freedom to spend*, because of the inundation of claims, so neither am I, who am not wise. But at home, I am rich,—rich enough for ten brothers. My wife Lidian is an incarnation of Christianity,—I call her Asia,—and keeps my philosophy from Antinomianism; my mother, whitest, mildest, most conservative of ladies, whose only exception to her universal preference for old things is her son; my boy, a piece of love and sunshine, well worth my watching from morning to night;—these, and three domestic women, who cook and sew and run for us, make all my household. Here I sit and read and write, with very little system, and, as far as regards composition, with the most fragmentary result: paragraphs incompressible, each sentence an infinitely repellent particle. ---

EMERSON TO CARLYLE

CONCORD, 17 October, 1838.

In a letter within a twelvemonth I have urged you to pay us a visit in America, and in Concord. I have believed that you would come one day, and do believe it. But if, on your part, you have been generous and affectionate enough to your friends here—or curious enough concerning our society—to wish to come, I think you must postpone, for the present, the satisfaction of your

friendship and your curiosity. At this moment I would not have you here, on my account. The publication of my *Address to the Divinity College* (copies of which I sent you) has been the occasion of an outcry in all our leading local newspapers against my "infidelity, pantheism, and atheism." The writers warn all and sundry against me, and against whatever is supposed to be related to my connection of opinion, &c.; against Transcendentalism, Goethe, and *Carlyle*. I am heartily sorry to see this last aspect of the storm in our washbowl. For, as Carlyle is nowise guilty, and has unpopuliarities of his own, I do not wish to embroil him in my parish differences. You were getting to be a great favorite with us all here, and are daily a greater with the American public, but just now, *in Boston*, where I am known as your editor, I fear you lose by the association. Now it is indispensable to your right influence here, that you should never come before our people as one of a clique, but as a detached, that is, universally associated man; so I am happy, as I could not have thought, that you have not yielded yourself to my entreaties. Let us wait a little until this foolish clamor be overblown. My position is fortunately such as to put me quite out of the reach of any real inconvenience from the panic-strikers or the panic-struck; and, indeed, so far as this uneasiness is a necessary result of mere inaction of mind, it seems very clear to me that, if I live, my neighbors must look for a great many more shocks, and perhaps harder to bear.

CARLYLE TO EMERSON

CHELSEA, LONDON, 15 November, 1838.

As for Concord and New England, alas! my Friend, I should but deface your Idyllion with an ugly contradiction, did I come in such mood as mine is. I am older in years than you; but in humor I am older by centuries. What a hope is in that ever-young heart, cheerful, healthful as the morning! And as for me, you have no conception what a crabbed, sulky piece of sorrow and dyspepsia I am grown; and growing, if I do not draw bridle. Let me gather heart a little! I have not forgotten Concord or the West; no, it lies always beautiful in the blue of the horizon, afar off and yet attainable; it is a great possession to me, should it even never be attained. But I have got to consider lately that it is you who are

coming hither first. That is the right way, is it not? New England is becoming more than ever part of Old England; why, you are nearer to us now than Yorkshire was a hundred years ago; this is literally a fact: you can come *without* making your will. It is one of my calculations that all Englishmen from all zones and hemispheres will, for a good while yet, resort occasionally to the Mother-Babel, and see a thing or two there. Come if you dare; I said there was a room, house-room and heart-room, constantly waiting you here, and you shall see blockheads by the million. *Pickwick* himself shall be visible; innocent young Dickens reserved for a questionable fate. The great Wordsworth shall talk till you yourself pronounce him to be a bore. Southey's complexion is still healthy mahogany-brown, with a fleecy of white hair, and eyes that seem running at full gallop. Leigh Hunt, "man of genius in the shape of a Cockney," is my near neighbor, full of quips and cranks, with good humor and no common sense. Old Rogers with his pale head, white, bare, and cold as snow, will work on you with those large blue eyes, cruel, sorrowful, and that sardonic shell-chin:—This is the Man, O Rogers, that wrote the German Poetry on American Prose; consider him well!—But whither am I running? My sheet is done!

CARLYLE TO EMERSON

CHELSEA, LONDON, 29 August, 1842.

Thanks for asking me to write you a word in the *Dial*. Had such a purpose struck me long ago, there have been many things passing through my head,—march-marching as they ever do, in long-drawn scandalous Falstaff regiments (a man ashamed to be seen passing through Coventry with such a set!)—some one of which, snatched out of the ragged rank, and dressed and drilled a little, might perhaps fitly have been saved from Chaos, and sent to the *Dial*. In future we shall be on the outlook. I love your *Dial*, and yet it is with a kind of shudder. You seem to me in danger of dividing yourselves from the Fact of this present Universe, in which alone, ugly as it is, can I find any anchorage, and soaring away after Ideas, Beliefs, Revelations, and such like,—into perilous altitudes, as I think; beyond the curve of perpetual frost, for one thing! I know not how to utter what impression you give me; take the above as some stamping of the fore-hoof. Surely

I could wish you *returned* into your own poor nineteenth century, its follies and maladies, its blind or half-blind, but gigantic toilings, its laughter and its tears, and trying to evolve in some measure the hidden Godlike that lies in *it*;—that seems to me the kind of feat for literary men. Alas, it is easier to screw one's self up into high and ever higher altitudes of Transcendentalism, and see nothing under one but the everlasting snows of Himmalayah, the Earth shrinking to a Planet, and the indigo firmament sowing itself with daylight stars, easy for *you*, for *me* but whither does it lead? I dread always, To inanity and mere injuring of the lungs!—"Stamp, Stamp, Stamp!"—Well, I do believe, for one thing, a man has no right to say to his own generation, turning quite away from it, "Be damned!" It is the whole Past and the whole Future, this same cotton-spinning, dollar-hunting, canting and shrieking, very wretched generation of ours. Come back into it, I tell you;—and so for the present will "stamp" no more.

CARLYLE TO EMERSON

CHELSEA, 3 November, 1844.

Your English volume of *Essays*, as Chapman probably informs you by this Post, was advertised yesterday, "with a Preface from me." That is hardly accurate, that latter clause. My "Preface" consists only of a certificate that the Book is correctly printed, and sent forth by a Publisher of your appointment, whom therefore all readers of yours ought to regard accordingly. Nothing more. There proves, I believe, no visible real vestige of a copyright obtainable here; - - -

The work itself falling on me by dribblets has not the right chance yet—not till I get it in the bound state, and read it all at once—to produce its due impression on me. But I will say already of it, It is a *sermon* to me, as all your other deliberate utterances are; a real *word*, which I feel to be such,—alas, almost or altogether the one such, in a world all full of jargons, hearsays, echoes, and vain noises, which cannot pass with me for *words*! This is a praise far beyond any "literary" one; literary praises are not worth repeating in comparison.—For the rest, I have to object still (what you will call objecting against the Law of Nature) that we find you a Speaker indeed, but as it were a *Soliloquizer* on the eter-

nal mountain-tops only, in vast solitudes where men and their affairs lie all hushed in a very dim remoteness, and only *the man* and the stars and the earth are visible,—whom, so fine a fellow seems he, we could perpetually punch into, and say, “Why won’t you come down and help us then? We have terrible need of one man like you down among us! It is cold and vacant up there, nothing paintable but rainbows and emotions; come down, and you shall do life-pictures, passions, facts,—which *transcend* all thought, and leave it stuttering and stammering!”—To which he answers that he won’t, can’t, and doesn’t want to (as the Cockneys have it)· and so I leave him, and say, “You Western Gymnosophist! Well, we can afford one man for that too. But—!”—By the bye, I ought to say, the sentences are very *brief*; and did not, in my *sheet* reading, always entirely cohere for me. Pure genuine Saxon; strong and simple; of a clearness, of a beauty—But they did not, sometimes, rightly stick to their foregoers and their followers. the paragraph not as a beaten *ingot*, but as a beautiful square *bag of duck-shot* held together by canvas! I will try them again, with the Book deliberately before me.—There are also one or two utterances about “Jesus,” “immortality,” and so forth, which will produce wide-eyes here and there. I do not say it was wrong to utter them; a man obeys his own Dæmon in these cases as his supreme law. I dare say you are a little bored occasionally with “Jesus,” &c.,—as I confess I myself am, when I discern what a beggarly Twaddle they have made of all that, what a greasy Cataplasm to lay to their own poltrooneries;—and an impatient person may exclaim with Voltaire, in serious moments: “*Au nom de Dieu, ne me parlez plus de cet homme-là!*”³ I have had enough of him;—I tell you I am alive too!”

CARLYLE TO EMERSON

CHELSEA, LONDON, 2 March, 1847.

--- I read your Book of Poems all faithfully, at Bay House (our Hampshire quarters); where the obstinate people,—with whom you are otherwise, in prose, a first favorite,—foolishly *refused* to let me read aloud; foolishly, for I would have made it mostly all plain by commentary:—so I

³ In God’s name, don’t talk to me of that man any more!

had to read for myself; and can say, in spite of my hardheartedness, I did gain, though under impediments, a real satisfaction and some tone of the Eternal Melodies sounding, afar off, ever and anon, in my ear! This is fact; a truth in Natural History; from which you are welcome to draw inferences. A grand View of the Universe, everywhere the sound (unhappily, *far off*, as it were) of a valiant, genuine Human Soul: this, even under rhyme, is a satisfaction worth some struggling for. But indeed you are very perverse, and through this perplexed *undiaphanous* element, you do not fall on me like radiant summer rainbows, like floods of sunlight, but with thin piercing radiances which affect me like the light of the *stars*. It is so. I wish you would become *concrete*, and write in prose the straightest way; but under any form I must put up with you, that is my lot —Chapman’s edition, as you probably know, is very beautiful. I believe there are enough of ardent silent seekers in England to buy up this edition from him, and resolutely study the same. as for the review multitude, they dare not exactly call it “unintelligible moonshine,” and so will probably hold their tongue. It is my fixed opinion that we are all at sea as to what is called Poetry, Art, &c., in these times; laboring under a dreadful incubus of *Tradition*, and mere “Cant heaped balefully on us up to the very Zenith,” as men, in nearly all other provinces of their Life, except perhaps the railway province, do now labor and stagger;—in a word, that Goethe-and-Schiller “*Kunst*” has far more brotherhood with Pusey-and-Newman’s *Shovelhattery*, and other the like deplorable phenomena, than it is in the least aware of! I beg you take warning: I am more serious in this than you suppose. But no, you will not; you whistle lightly over my prophecies, and go your own stiff-necked road. Unfortunate man! —

EMERSON TO CARLYLE

CONCORD, 6 May, 1856.

DEAR CARLYLE,—There is no escape from the forces of time and life, and we do not write letters to the gods or to our friends, but only to attorneys, landlords, and tenants. But the planes and platforms on which all stand remain the same, and we are ever expecting the descent of the heavens, which is to put us into familiarity with the first named. When I ceased to write to

you for a long time, I said to myself,—If anything really good should happen here,—any stroke of good sense or virtue in our politics, or of great sense in a book,—I will send it on the instant to the formidable man, but I will not repeat to him every month, that there are no news. Thank me for my resolution, and for keeping it through the long night. One book, last summer, came out in New York, a nondescript monster which yet had terrible eyes and buffalo strength, and was indisputably American,—which I thought to send you; but the book throve so badly with the few to whom I showed it, and wanted good morals so much, that I never did. Yet I believe now again, I shall. It is called *Leaves of Grass*,—was written and printed by a journeyman printer in Brooklyn, New York, named Walter Whitman; and after you have looked into it, if you think, as you may, that it is only an auctioneer's inventory of a warehouse, you can light your pipe with it.

CARLYLE TO EMERSON

This letter was written after the death of Mrs. Carlyle.

MENTONE, FRANCE, ALPES MARITIMES,
27 January, 1867.

MY DEAR EMERSON,—It is a long time since I last wrote to you; and a long distance in space and in fortune,—from the shores of the Solway in summer 1865, to this niche of the Alps and Mediterranean to-day, after what has befallen me in the interim. A longer interval, I think, and surely by far a sadder, than ever occurred between us before, since we first met in the Scotch moors, some five and thirty years ago. You have written me various Notes, too, and Letters, all good and cheering to me,—almost the only truly human speech I have heard from anybody living;—and still my stony silence could not be broken; not till now, though often looking forward to it, could I resolve on such a thing. You will think me far gone, and much bankrupt in hope and heart;—and indeed I am; as good as without hope and without fear; a gloomily serious, silent, and sad old man; gazing into the final chasm of things, in mute dialogue with "Death, Judgment, and Eternity" (dialogue *mute* on both sides!), not caring to discourse with poor articulate-speaking fellow-creatures on *their* sorts of

topics. It is right of me; and yet also it is not right. I often feel that I had better be dead than thus indifferent, contemptuous, disgusted with the world and its roaring nonsense, which I have no thought farther of lifting a finger to help, and only try to keep out of the way of, and shut my door against. But the truth is, I was nearly killed by that hideous Book on Friedrich,—twelve years in continuous wrestle with the nightmares and the subterranean hydras;—nearly *killed*, and had often thought I should be altogether, and must die leaving the monster not so much as finished! This is one truth, not so evident to any friend or onlooker as it is to myself: and then there is another, known to myself alone, as it were; and of which I am best not to speak to others, or to speak to them no farther. By the calamity of April last, I lost my little all in this world; and have no soul left who can make any corner of this world into a *home* for me any more. Bright, heroic, tender, true and noble was that lost treasure of my heart, who faithfully accompanied me in all the rocky ways and climbings; and I am forever poor without her. She was snatched from me in a moment,—as by a death from the gods. Very beautiful her death was; radiantly beautiful (to those who understand it) had all her life been: *quid plura?*⁴ I should be among the dullest and stupidest, if I were not among the saddest of all men. But not a word more on all this.

EMERSON TO CARLYLE

BALTIMORE, MD., 5 January, 1872.

MY DEAR CARLYLE,—I received from you through Mr. Chapman, just before Christmas, the last rich instalment of your Library Edition; viz. Vols. IV.-X. *Life of Friedrich*; Vols. I.-III. *Translations from German*; one volume *General Index*; eleven volumes in all,—and now my stately collection is perfect. Perfect too is your Victory. But I clatter my chains with joy, as I did forty years ago, at your earliest gifts. Happy man you should be, to whom the Heaven has allowed such masterly completion. You shall wear your crown at the Pan-Saxon Games with no equal or approaching competitor in sight,—well earned by genius and exhaustive labor, and with nations for your pupils and praisers. I count

⁴ Why [say] more?

it my eminent happiness to have been so nearly your contemporary, and your friend,—permitted to detect by its rare light the new star almost before the Easterners had seen it, and to have found no disappointment, but joyful confirmation rather, in coming close to its orb Rest, rest, now for a time, I pray you, and be thankful. Meantime, I know well all your perversities, and give them a wide berth. They seriously annoy a great many worthy readers, nations of readers sometimes,—but I heap them all as style, and read them as I read Rabelais's gigantic humors which astonish in order to force attention, and by and by are seen to be the rhetoric of a highly virtuous gentleman who *swears*. I have been quite too busy with fast succeeding *jobs* (I may well call them), in the last year, to have read much in these proud books; but I begin to see daylight coming through my fogs, and I have not lost in the least my appetite for reading,—resolve, with my old Harvard professor, “to retire and read the Authors.”

I am impatient to deserve your grand Volumes by reading in them with all the haughty airs that belong to seventy years which I shall count if I live till May, 1873. Meantime I see well that you have lost none of your power, and I wish that you would let in some good Eckermann to dine with you day by day, and competent to report your opinions,—for you can speak as well as write, and what the world to come should know. . . .

Affectionately,

R. W. EMERSON.

NATURE

(September, 1836)

Nature, Emerson's earliest statement of his mature thinking, first mentioned in the *Journals* for July, 1833, was partly written in the Old Manse, where Hawthorne was to live in the 1840's. The edition of five hundred copies sold very slowly. In the second edition (1849) Emerson added the poem which now stands at the beginning of the little book. In the 1836 edition he had used a quotation from Plotinus: “Nature is but an image or imitation of wisdom, the last thing of the soul; Nature being a thing which doth only do, but not know.” On September 17, 1836, Emerson wrote to Carlyle: “I send you a little book I have just now published, as an entering wedge, I hope, for something more worthy and significant. This is only a naming of topics on which I would

gladly speak and gladly hear.” For Carlyle's estimate of the book, see his letter to Emerson, February 13, 1837, printed elsewhere in this volume.

A subtle chain of countless rings
The next unto the farthest brings;
The eye reads omens where it goes,
And speaks all languages the rose;
And, striving to be man, the worm
Mounts through all the spires of form.

INTRODUCTION

Our age is retrospective. It builds the sepulchres of the fathers. It writes biographies, histories, and criticism. The foregoing generations beheld God and nature face to face; we, through their eyes. Why should not we also enjoy an original relation to the universe? Why should not we have a poetry and philosophy of insight and not of tradition, and a religion by revelation to us, and not the history of theirs? Embosomed for a season in nature, whose floods of life stream around and through us, and invite us, by the powers they supply, to action proportioned to nature, why should we grope among the dry bones of the past, or put the living generation into masquerade out of its faded wardrobe? The sun shines to-day also. There is more wool and flax in the fields. There are new lands, new men, new thoughts. Let us demand our own works and laws and worship.

Undoubtedly we have no questions to ask which are unanswerable. We must trust the perfection of the creation so far as to believe that whatever curiosity the order of things has awakened in our minds, the order of things can satisfy. Every man's condition is a solution in hieroglyphic to those inquiries he would put. He acts it as life, before he apprehends it as truth. In like manner, nature is already, in its forms and tendencies, describing its own design. Let us interrogate the great apparition that shines so peacefully around us. Let us inquire, to what end is nature?

All science has one aim, namely, to find a theory of nature. We have theories of races and of functions, but scarcely yet a remote approach to an idea of creation. We are now so far from the road to truth, that religious teachers dispute and hate each other, and speculative men are esteemed unsound and frivolous. But to a sound judgment, the most abstract truth is the most

practical. Whenever a true theory appears, it will be its own evidence. Its test is, that it will explain all phenomena. Now many are thought not only unexplained but inexplicable; as language, sleep, madness, dreams, beasts, sex.

Philosophically considered, the universe is composed of Nature and the Soul. Strictly speaking, therefore, all that is separate from us, all which Philosophy distinguishes as the NOT ME, that is, both nature and art, all other men and my own body, must be ranked under this name, NATURE. In enumerating the values of nature and casting up their sum, I shall use the word in both senses;—in its common and in its philosophical import. In inquiries so general as our present one, the inaccuracy is not material; no confusion of thought will occur. *Nature*, in the common sense, refers to essences unchanged by man; space, the air, the river, the leaf. *Art* is applied to the mixture of his will with the same things, as in a house, a canal, a statue, a picture. But his operations taken together are so insignificant, a little chipping, baking, patching, and washing, that in an impression so grand as that of the world on the human mind, they do not vary the result.

I. NATURE

To go into solitude, a man needs to retire as much from his chamber as from society. I am not solitary whilst I read and write, though nobody is with me. But if a man would be alone, let him look at the stars. The rays that come from those heavenly worlds will separate between him and what he touches. One might think the atmosphere was made transparent with this design, to give man, in the heavenly bodies, the perpetual presence of the sublime. Seen in the streets of cities, how great they are! If the stars should appear one night in a thousand years, how would men believe and adore; and preserve for many generations the remembrance of the city of God which had been shown! But every night come out these envoys of beauty, and light the universe with their admonishing smile.

The stars awaken a certain reverence, because though always present, they are inaccessible; but all natural objects make a kindred impression, when the mind is open to their influence. Nature never wears a mean appearance. Neither does the wisest man extort her secret, and lose his curiosity by finding out all her perfection. Na-

ture never became a toy to a wise spirit. The flowers, the animals, the mountains, reflected the wisdom of his best hour, as much as they had delighted the simplicity of his childhood.

When we speak of nature in this manner, we have a distinct but most poetical sense in the mind. We mean the integrity of impression made by manifold natural objects. It is this which distinguishes the stick of timber of the wood-cutter, from the tree of the poet. The charming landscape which I saw this morning is indubitably made up of some twenty or thirty farms. Miller owns this field, Locke that, and Manning the woodland beyond. But none of them owns the landscape. There is a property in the horizon which no man has but he whose eye can integrate all the parts, that is, the poet. This is the best part of these men's farms, yet to this their warranty-deeds give no title.

To speak truly, few adult persons can see nature. Most persons do not see the sun. At least they have a very superficial seeing. The sun illuminates only the eye of the man, but shines into the eye and the heart of the child. The lover of nature is he whose inward and outward senses are still truly adjusted to each other; who has retained the spirit of infancy even into the era of manhood. His intercourse with heaven and earth becomes part of his daily food. In the presence of nature a wild delight runs through the man, in spite of real sorrows. Nature says,—he is my creature, and maugre all his impertinent griefs, he shall be glad with me. Not the sun or the summer alone, but every hour and season yields its tribute of delight; for every hour and change corresponds to and authorizes a different state of the mind, from breathless noon to grimmest midnight. Nature is a setting that fits equally well a comic or a mourning piece. In good health, the air is a cordial of incredible virtue. Crossing a bare common, in snow puddles, at twilight, under a clouded sky, without having in my thoughts any occurrence of special good fortune, I have enjoyed a perfect exhilaration. I am glad to the brink of fear. In the woods, too, a man casts off his years, as the snake his slough, and at what period soever of life, is always a child. In the woods is perpetual youth. Within these plantations of God, a decorum and sanctity reign, a perennial festival is dressed, and the guest sees not how he should tire of them in a thousand years. In the woods, we return to

reason and faith There I feel that nothing can befall me in life,—no disgrace, no calamity (leaving me my eyes), which nature cannot repair. Standing on the bare ground,—my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space,—all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eye-ball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or parcel of God. The name of the nearest friend sounds then foreign and accidental. to be brothers, to be acquaintances, master or servant, is then a trifle and a disturbance. I am the lover of uncontained and immortal beauty. In the wilderness, I find something more dear and connate than in streets or villages. In the tranquil landscape, and especially in the distant line of the horizon, man beholds somewhat as beautiful as his own nature.

The greatest delight which the fields and woods minister is the suggestion of an occult relation between man and the vegetable. I am not alone and unacknowledged. They nod to me, and I to them. The waving of the boughs in the storm is new to me and old. It takes me by surprise, and yet is not unknown. Its effect is like that of a higher thought or a better emotion coming over me, when I deemed I was thinking justly or doing right.

Yet it is certain that the power to produce this delight does not reside in nature, but in man, or in a harmony of both. It is necessary to use these pleasures with great temperance. For nature is not always tricked in holiday attire, but the same scene which yesterday breathed perfume and glittered as for the frolic of the nymphs, is over-spread with melancholy to-day. Nature always wears the colors of the spirit. To a man laboring under calamity, the heat of his own fire hath sadness in it. Then there is a kind of contempt of the landscape felt by him who has just lost by death a dear friend. The sky is less grand as it shuts down over less worth in the population.

II. COMMODITY

Whoever considers the final cause of the world will discern a multitude of uses that enter as parts into that result. They all admit of being thrown into one of the following classes: Commodity; Beauty; Language; and Discipline.

Under the general name of commodity,¹ I

¹ Convenience; usefulness in satisfying man's physical needs.

rank all those advantages which our senses owe to nature. This, of course, is a benefit which is temporary and mediate, not ultimate, like its service to the soul Yet although low, it is perfect in its kind, and is the only use of nature which all men apprehend. The misery of man appears like childish petulance, when we explore the steady and prodigal provision that has been made for his support and delight on this green ball which floats him through the heavens. What angels invented these splendid ornaments, these rich conveniences, this ocean of air above, this ocean of water beneath, this firmament of earth between? this zodiac of lights, this tent of dropping clouds, this striped coat of climates, this fourfold year? Beasts, fire, water, stones, and corn serve him. The field is at once his floor, his work-yard, his play-ground, his garden, and his bed.

*More servants wait on man
Than he'll take notice of.—²*

Nature, in its ministry to man, is not only the material, but is also the process and the result. All the parts incessantly work into each other's hands for the profit of man. The wind sows the seed; the sun evaporates the sea; the wind blows the vapor to the field; the ice, on the other side of the planet, condenses rain on this, the rain feeds the plant; the plant feeds the animal; and thus the endless circulations of the divine charity nourish man.

The useful arts are reproductions or new combinations by the wit of man, of the same natural benefactors. He no longer waits for favoring gales, but by means of steam, he realizes the fable of Æolus's bag, and carries the two and thirty winds in the boiler of his boat. To diminish friction, he paves the road with iron bars, and, mounting a coach with a shipload of men, animals, and merchandise behind him, he darts through the country, from town to town, like an eagle or a swallow through the air. By the aggregate of these aids, how is the face of the world changed, from the era of Noah to that of Napoleon! The private poor man hath cities, ships, canals, bridges, built for him. He goes to the post-office, and the human race run on his errands; to the book-shop, and the human race read and write of all that happens, for him; to

² From George Herbert's "Man," which is quoted again in Section VIII.

the court-house, and nations repair his wrongs. He sets his house upon the road, and the human race go forth every morning, and shovel out the snow, and cut a path for him.

But there is no need of specifying particulars in this class of uses. The catalogue is endless, and the examples so obvious, that I shall leave them to the reader's reflection, with the general remark, that this mercenary benefit is one which has respect to a farther good. A man is fed, not that he may be fed, but that he may work.

III. BEAUTY

A nobler want of man is served by nature, namely, the love of beauty.

The ancient Greeks called the world *κόσμος*, beauty. Such is the constitution of all things, or such the plastic power of the human eye, that the primary forms, as the sky, the mountain, the tree, the animal, give us a delight *in and for themselves*; a pleasure arising from outline, color, motion, and grouping. This seems partly owing to the eye itself. The eye is the best of artists. By the mutual action of its structure and of the laws of light, perspective is produced, which integrates every mass of objects, of what character soever, into a well colored and shaded globe, so that where the particular objects are mean and unaffecting, the landscape which they compose is round and symmetrical. And as the eye is the best composer, so light is the first of painters. There is no object so foul that intense light will not make beautiful. And the stimulus it affords to the sense, and a sort of infinitude which it hath, like space and time, make all matter gay. Even the corpse has its own beauty. But besides this general grace diffused over nature, almost all the individual forms are agreeable to the eye, as is proved by our endless imitations of some of them, as the acorn, the grape, the pine-cone, the wheat-ear, the egg, the wings and forms of most birds, the lion's claw, the serpent, the butterfly, sea-shells, flames, clouds, buds, leaves, and the forms of many trees, as the palm.

For better consideration, we may distribute the aspects of Beauty in a threefold manner.

1. First, the simple perception of natural forms is a delight. The influence of the forms and actions in nature is so needful to man, that, in its lowest functions, it seems to lie on the confines of commodity and beauty. To the body and mind which have been cramped by noxious

work or company, nature is medicinal and restores their tone. The tradesman, the attorney comes out of the din and craft of the street and sees the sky and the woods, and is a man again.

In their eternal calm, he finds himself. The health of the eye seems to demand a horizon. We are never tired, so long as we can see far enough.

But in other hours, Nature satisfies by its loveliness, and without any mixture of corporeal benefit. I see the spectacle of morning from the hilltop over against my house, from daybreak to sunrise, with emotions which an angel might share. The long slender bars of cloud float like fishes in the sea of crimson light. From the earth, as a shore, I look out into that silent sea. I seem to partake its rapid transformations; the active enchantment reaches my dust, and I dilate and conspire with the morning wind. How does Nature deify us with a few and cheap elements! Give me health and a day, and I will make the pomp of emperors ridiculous. The dawn is my Assyria; the sunset and moonrise my Paphos, and unimaginable realms of faerie; broad noon shall be my England of the senses and the understanding; the night shall be my Germany of mystic philosophy and dreams.

Not less excellent, except for our less susceptibility in the afternoon, was the charm, last evening, of a January sunset. The western clouds divided and subdivided themselves into pink flakes modulated with tints of unspeakable softness; and the air had so much life and sweetness that it was a pain to come within doors. What was it that nature would say? Was there no meaning in the live repose of the valley behind the mill, and which Homer or Shakespeare could not re-form for me in words? The leafless trees become spires of flame in the sunset, with the blue east for their background, and the stars of the dead calices of flowers, and every withered stem and stubble rimed with frost, contribute something to the mute music.

The inhabitants of cities suppose that the country landscape is pleasant only half the year. I please myself with the graces of the winter scenery, and believe that we are as much touched by it as by the genial influences of summer. To the attentive eye, each moment of the year has its own beauty, and in the same field, it beholds, every hour, a picture which was never seen before, and which shall never be seen again. The heavens change every moment, and reflect their

glory or gloom on the plains beneath. The state of the crop in the surrounding farms alters the expression of the earth from week to week. The succession of native plants in the pastures and roadsides, which makes the silent clock by which time tells the summer hours, will make even the divisions of the day sensible to a keen observer. The tribes of birds and insects, like the plants punctual to their time, follow each other, and the year has room for all. By watercourses, the variety is greater. In July, the blue pontederia or pickerel-weed blooms in large beds in the shallow parts of our pleasant river, and swarms with yellow butterflies in continual motion. Art cannot rival this pomp of purple and gold. Indeed the river is a perpetual gala, and boasts each month a new ornament.

But this beauty of Nature which is seen and felt as beauty, is the least part. The shows of day, the dewy morning, the rainbow, mountains, orchards in blossom, stars, moonlight, shadows in still water, and the like, if too eagerly hunted, become shows merely, and mock us with their unreality. Go out of the house to see the moon, and 't is mere tinsel; it will not please as when its light shines upon your necessary journey. The beauty that shimmers in the yellow afternoons of October, who ever could clutch it? Go forth to find it, and it is gone; 't is only a mirage as you look from the windows of diligence.

2. The presence of a higher, namely, of the spiritual element is essential to its perfection. The high and divine beauty which can be loved without effeminacy, is that which is found in combination with the human will. Beauty is the mark God sets upon virtue. Every natural action is graceful. Every heroic act is also decent, and causes the place and the bystanders to shine. We are taught by great actions that the universe is the property of every individual in it. Every rational creature has all nature for his dowry and estate. It is his, if he will. He may divest himself of it; he may creep into a corner, and abdicate his kingdom, as most men do, but he is entitled to the world by his constitution. In proportion to the energy of his thought and will, he takes up the world into himself. "All those things for which men plough, build, or sail, obey virtue"; said Sallust. "The winds and waves," said Gibbon, "are always on the side of the ablest navigators." So are the sun and moon and all the stars of heaven. When a noble

act is done,—perchance in a scene of great natural beauty; when Leonidas and his three hundred martyrs consume one day in dying, and the sun and moon come each and look at them once in the steep defile of Thermopylæ, when Arnold Winkelried, in the high Alps, under the shadow of the avalanche, gathers in his side a sheaf of Austrian spears to break the line for his comrades, are not these heroes entitled to add the beauty of the scene to the beauty of the deed? When the bark of Columbus nears the shore of America;—before it, the beach lined with savages, fleeing out of all their huts of cane; the sea behind; and the purple mountains of the Indian Archipelago around, can we separate the man from the living picture? Does not the New World clothe his form with her palm-groves and savannahs as fit drapery? Ever does natural beauty steal in like air, and envelope great actions. When Sir Henry Vane was dragged up the Tower-hill, sitting on a sled, to suffer death as the champion of the English laws, one of the multitude cried out to him, "You never sate on so glorious a seat!" Charles II., to intimidate the citizens of London, caused the patriot Lord Russell to be drawn in an open coach through the principal streets of the city on his way to the scaffold. "But," his biographer says, "the multitude imagined they saw liberty and virtue sitting by his side." In private places, among sordid objects, an act of truth or heroism seems at once to draw to itself the sky as its temple, the sun as its candle. Nature stretches out her arms to embrace man, only let his thoughts be of equal greatness. Willingly does she follow his steps with the rose and the violet, and bend her lines of grandeur and grace to the decoration of her darling child. Only let his thoughts be of equal scope, and the frame will suit the picture. A virtuous man is in unison with her works, and makes the central figure of the visible sphere. Homer, Pindar, Socrates, Phocion, associate themselves fitly in our memory with the geography and climate of Greece. The visible heavens and earth sympathize with Jesus. And in common life whosoever has seen a person of powerful character and happy genius, will have remarked how easily he took all things along with him,—the persons, the opinions, and the day, and nature became ancillary to a man.

3. There is still another aspect under which the beauty of the world may be viewed, namely,

as it becomes an object of the intellect. Beside the relation of things to virtue, they have a relation to thought. The intellect searches out the absolute order of things as they stand in the mind of God, and without the colors of affection. The intellectual and the active powers seem to succeed each other, and the exclusive activity of the one generates the exclusive activity of the other. There is something unfriendly in each to the other, but they are like the alternate periods of feeding and working in animals, each prepares and will be followed by the other. Therefore does beauty, which, in relation to actions, as we have seen, comes unsought, and comes because it is unsought, remain for the apprehension and pursuit of the intellect, and then again, in its turn, of the active power. Nothing divine dies. All good is eternally reproductive. The beauty of nature re-forms itself in the mind, and not for barren contemplation, but for new creation.

All men are in some degree impressed by the face of the world; some men even to delight. This love of beauty is Taste. Others have the same love in such excess, that, not content with admiring, they seek to embody it in new forms. The creation of beauty is Art.

The production of a work of art throws a light upon the mystery of humanity. A work of art is an abstract or epitome of the world. It is the result or expression of nature, in miniature. For although the works of nature are innumerable and all different, the result or the expression of them all is similar and single. Nature is a sea of forms radically alike and even unique. A leaf, a sunbeam, a landscape, the ocean, make an analogous impression on the mind. What is common to them all,—that perfectness and harmony, is beauty. The standard of beauty is the entire circuit of natural forms,—the totality of nature; which the Italians expressed by defining beauty "*il più nell' uno*."³ Nothing is quite beautiful alone, nothing but is beautiful in the whole. A single object is only so far beautiful as it suggests this universal grace. The poet, the painter, the sculptor, the musician, the architect, seek each to concentrate this radiance of the world on one point, and each in his several work to satisfy the love of beauty which stimulates him to produce. Thus is Art a nature passed through the alembic of man. Thus in art does

³ Many in one.

Nature work through the will of a man filled with the beauty of her first works.

The world thus exists to the soul to satisfy the desire of beauty. This element I call an ultimate end. No reason can be asked or given why the soul seeks beauty. Beauty, in its largest and profoundest sense, is one expression for the universe. God is the all-fair. Truth, and goodness, and beauty, are but different faces of the same All. But beauty in nature is not ultimate. It is the herald of inward and eternal beauty, and is not alone a solid and satisfactory good. It must stand as a part, and not as yet the last or highest expression of the final cause of Nature.

IV. LANGUAGE

Language is a third use which Nature subserves to man. Nature is the vehicle of thought, and in a simple, double, and threefold degree

1. Words are signs of natural facts.
2. Particular natural facts are symbols of particular spiritual facts.

3. Nature is the symbol of spirit.

1. Words are signs of natural facts. The use of natural history is to give us aid in supernatural history; the use of the outer creation, to give us language for the beings and changes of the inward creation. Every word which is used to express a moral or intellectual fact, if traced to its root, is found to be borrowed from some material appearance. *Right* means *straight*; *wrong* means *twisted*. *Spirit* primarily means *wind*; *transgression*, the crossing of a *line*; *supercilious*, the *raising of the eyebrow*. We say the *heart* to express emotion, the *head* to denote thought; and *thought* and *emotion* are words borrowed from sensible things, and now appropriated to spiritual nature. Most of the process by which this transformation is made, is hidden from us in the remote time when language was framed; but the same tendency may be daily observed in children. Children and savages use only nouns or names of things, which they convert into verbs, and apply to analogous mental acts.

2. But this origin of all words that convey a spiritual import,—so conspicuous a fact in this history of language,—is our least debt to nature. It is not words only that are emblematic; it is things which are emblematic. Every natural fact is a symbol of some spiritual fact. Every appearance in nature corresponds to some state

of the mind, and that state of the mind can only be described by presenting that natural appearance as its picture. An enraged man is a lion, a cunning man is a fox, a firm man is a rock, a learned man is a torch. A lamb is innocence, a snake is subtle spite; flowers express to us the delicate affections. Light and darkness are our familiar expression for knowledge and ignorance; and heat for love. Visible distance behind and before us, is respectively our image of memory and hope.

Who looks upon a river in a meditative hour and is not reminded of the flux of all things? Throw a stone into the stream, and the circles that propagate themselves are the beautiful type of all influence. Man is conscious of a universal soul within or behind his individual life, wherein, as in a firmament, the natures of Justice, Truth, Love, Freedom, arise and shine. The universal soul he calls Reason: it is not mine, or thine, or his, but we are its, we are its property and men. And the blue sky in which the private earth is buried, the sky with its eternal calm, and full of everlasting orbs, is the type of Reason. That which intellectually considered we call Reason,⁴ considered in relation to nature, we call Spirit. Spirit is the Creator. Spirit hath life in itself. And man in all ages and countries embodies it in his language as the FATHER.

It is easily seen that there is nothing lucky or capricious in these analogies, but that they are constant, and pervade nature. These are not the dreams of a few poets, here and there, but man is an analogist, and studies relations in all objects. He is placed in the centre of beings, and a ray of relation passes from every other being to him. And neither can man be understood without these objects, nor these objects without man. All the facts in natural history taken by themselves, have no value, but are barren, like a single sex. But marry it to human history, and it is full of life. Whole floras, all Linnæus' and Buffon's volumes, are dry catalogues of facts; but the most trivial of these facts, the habit of a plant, the organs, or work, or noise of an insect, applied to the illustration of a fact in intellectual philosophy, or in any way associated to human nature, affects us in the most lively and

agreeable manner. The seed of a plant,—to what affecting analogies in the nature of man is that little fruit made use of, in all discourse, up to the voice of Paul, who calls the human corpse a seed,—“It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.” The motion of the earth round its axis and round the sun, makes the day and the year. These are certain amounts of brute light and heat. But is there no intent of an analogy between man's life and the seasons? And do the seasons gain no grandeur or pathos from that analogy? The instincts of the ant are very unimportant considered as the ant's, but the moment a ray of relation is seen to extend from it to man, and the little drudge is seen to be a monitor, a little body with a mighty heart, then all its habits, even that said to be recently observed, that it never sleeps, become sublime.

Because of this radical correspondence between visible things and human thoughts, savages, who have only what is necessary, converse in figures. As we go back in history, language becomes more picturesque, until its infancy, when it is all poetry; or all spiritual facts are represented by natural symbols. The same symbols are found to make the original elements of all languages. It has moreover been observed, that the idioms of all languages approach each other in passages of the greatest eloquence and power. And as this is the first language, so is it the last. This immediate dependence of language upon nature, this conversion of an outward phenomenon into a type of somewhat inhuman life, never loses its power to affect us. It is this which gives that piquancy to the conversation of a strong-natured farmer or backwoodsman, which all men relish.

A man's power to connect his thought with its proper symbol, and so to utter it, depends on the simplicity of his character, that is, upon his love of truth and his desire to communicate it without loss. The corruption of man is followed by the corruption of language. When simplicity of character and the sovereignty of ideas is broken up by the prevalence of secondary desires,—the desire of riches, of pleasure, of power, and of praise,—and duplicity and falsehood take place of simplicity and truth, the power over nature as an interpreter of the will is in a degree lost; new imagery ceases to be created, and old words are perverted to stand for things which are not; a paper currency is employed,

⁴ Reason, or pure thought, in the Transcendental philosophy is opposed to the Understanding, or common sense.

when there is no bullion in the vaults. In due time the fraud is manifest, and words lose all power to stimulate the understanding or the affections. Hundreds of writers may be found in every long-civilized nation who for a short time believe and make others believe that they see and utter truths, who do not of themselves clothe one thought in its natural garment, but who feed unconsciously on the language created by the primary writers of the country, those, namely, who hold primarily on nature.

But wise men pierce this rotten diction and fasten words again to visible things; so that picturesque language is at once a commanding certificate that he who employs it is a man in alliance with truth and God. The moment our discourse rises above the ground line of familiar facts and is inflamed with passion or exalted by thought, it clothes itself in images. A man conversing in earnest, if he watch his intellectual processes, will find that a material image more or less luminous arises in his mind, contemporaneous with every thought, which furnishes the vestment of the thought. Hence, good writing and brilliant discourse are perpetual allegories. This imagery is spontaneous. It is the blending of experience with the present action of the mind. It is proper creation. It is the working of the Original Cause through the instruments he has already made.

These facts may suggest the advantage which the country-life possesses, for a powerful mind, over the artificial and curtailed life of cities. We know more from nature than we can at will communicate. Its light flows into the mind evermore, and we forget its presence. The poet, the orator, bred in the woods, whose senses have been nourished by their fair and appeasing changes, year after year, without design and without heed,—shall not lose their lesson altogether, in the roar of cities or the broil of politics. Long hereafter, amidst agitation and terror in national councils,—in the hour of revolution,—these solemn images shall reappear in their morning lustre, as fit symbols and words of the thoughts which the passing events shall awaken. At the call of a noble sentiment, again the woods wave, the pines murmur, the river rolls and shines, and the cattle low upon the mountains, as he saw and heard them in his infancy. And with these forms, the spells of persuasion, the keys of power are put into his hands.

3 We are thus assisted by natural objects in the expression of particular meanings. But how great a language to convey such pepper-corn informations! Did it need such noble races of creatures, this profusion of forms, this host of orbs in heaven, to furnish man with the dictionary and grammar of his municipal speech? Whilst we use this grand cipher to expedite the affairs of our pot and kettle, we feel that we have not yet put it to its use, neither are able. We are like travellers using the cinders of a volcano to roast their eggs. Whilst we see that it always stands ready to clothe what we would say, we cannot avoid the question whether the characters are not significant of themselves. Have mountains, and waves, and skies, no significance but what we consciously give them when we employ them as emblems of our thoughts? The world is emblematic. Parts of speech are metaphors, because the whole of nature is a metaphor of the human mind. The laws of moral nature answer to those of matter as face to face in a glass. "The visible world and the relation of its parts, is the dial plate of the invisible." The axioms of physics translate the laws of ethics. Thus, "the whole is greater than its part"; "reaction is equal to action"; "the smallest weight may be made to lift the greatest, the difference of weight being compensated by time"; and many the like propositions, which have an ethical as well as physical sense. These propositions have a much more extensive and universal sense when applied to human life, than when confined to technical use.

35 In like manner, the memorable words of history and the proverbs of nations consist usually of a natural fact, selected as a picture or parable of a moral truth. Thus; A rolling stone gathers no moss; A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush; A cripple in the right way will beat a racer in the wrong; Make hay while the sun shines; 'Tis hard to carry a full cup even; Vinegar is the son of wine; The last ounce broke the camel's back; Long-lived trees make roots first;—and the like. In their primary sense these are trivial facts, but we repeat them for the value of their analogical import. What is true of proverbs, is true of all fables, parables, and allegories.

50 This relation between the mind and matter is not fancied by some poets, but stands in the will of God, and so is free to be known by all men. It appears to men, or it does not appear. When

in fortunate hours we ponder this miracle, the wise man doubts if at all other times he is not blind and deaf,

*Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder?*⁵

for the universe becomes transparent, and the light of higher laws than its own shines through it. It is the standing problem which has exercised the wonder and the study of every fine genius since the world began, from the era of the Egyptians and the Brahmins to that of Pythagoras, of Plato, of Bacon, of Leibnitz, of Swedenborg. There sits the Sphinx at the roadside, and from age to age, as each prophet comes by, he tries his fortune at reading her riddle. There seems to be a necessity in spirit to manifest itself in material forms; and day and night, river and storm, beast and bird, acid and alkali, preëxist in necessary Ideas in the mind of God, and are what they are by virtue of preceding affections in the world of spirit. A Fact is the end or last issue of spirit. The visible creation is the terminus or the circumference of the invisible world. "Material objects," said a French philosopher, "are necessarily kinds of *scoriæ* of the substantial thoughts of the Creator, which must always preserve an exact relation to their first origin; in other words, visible nature must have a spiritual and moral side."

This doctrine is abstruse, and though the images of "garment," "scoriæ," "mirror," etc., may stimulate the fancy, we must summon the aid of subtler and more vital expositors to make it plain. "Every scripture is to be interpreted by the same spirit which gave it forth,"—is the fundamental law of criticism. A life in harmony with nature, the love of truth and of virtue, will purge the eyes to understand her text. By degrees we may come to know the primitive sense of the permanent objects of nature, so that the world shall be to us an open book, and every form significant of its hidden life and final cause.

A new interest surprises us, whilst, under the view now suggested, we contemplate the fearful extent and multitude of objects; since "every object rightly seen, unlocks a new faculty of the soul." That which was unconscious truth, becomes, when interpreted and defined in an ob-

ject, a part of the domain of knowledge,—a new weapon in the magazine of power.

V. DISCIPLINE

5 In view of the significance of nature, we arrive at once at a new fact, that nature is a discipline. This use of the world includes the preceding uses, as parts of itself.

10 Space, time, society, labor, climate, food, locomotion, the animals, the mechanical forces, give us sincerest lessons, day by day, whose meaning is unlimited. They educate both the Understanding and the Reason. Every property of matter is a school for the understanding,—
15 its solidity or resistance, its inertia, its extension, its figure, its divisibility. The understanding adds, divides, combines, measures, and finds nutriment and room for its activity in this worthy scene. Meantime, Reason transfers all
20 these lessons into its own world of thought, by perceiving the analogy that marries Matter and Mind.

1. Nature is a discipline of the understanding in intellectual truths. Our dealing with sensible objects is a constant exercise in the necessary lessons of difference, of likeness, of order, of being and seeming, of progressive arrangement; of ascent from particular to general; of combination to one end of manifold forces.
25 Proportioned to the importance of the organ to be formed, is the extreme care with which its tuition is provided,—a care pretermitted in no single case. What tedious training, day after day, year after year, never ending, to form the common sense; what continual reproduction of
35 annoyances, inconveniences, dilemmas; what rejoicing over us of little men; what disputing of prices, what reckonings of interest,—and all to form the Hand of the mind;—to instruct us that
40 "good thoughts are no better than good dreams, unless they be executed!"

The same good office is performed by Property and its filial systems of debt and credit. Debt, grinding debt, whose iron face the widow, the orphan, and the sons of genius fear and hate,—
45 debt, which consumes so much time, which so cripples and disheartens a great spirit with cares that seem so base, is a preceptor whose lessons cannot be forgone, and is needed most
50 by those who suffer from it most. Moreover, property, which has been well compared to snow,—"if it fall level to-day, it will be blown into

⁵ *Macbeth*, Act III, Scene iv.

drifts to-morrow,"—is the surface action of internal machinery, like the index on the face of a clock. Whilst now it is the gymnastics of the understanding, it is hiving, in the foresight of the spirit, experience in profounder laws.

The whole character and fortune of the individual are affected by the least inequalities in the culture of the understanding; for example, in the perception of differences. Therefore is Space, and therefore Time, that man may know that things are not huddled and lumped, but sundered and individual. A bell and a plough have each their use, and neither can do the office of the other. Water is good to drink, coal to burn, wool to wear; but wool cannot be drunk, nor water spun, nor coal eaten. The wise man shows his wisdom in separation, in gradation, and his scale of creatures and of merits is as wide as nature. The foolish have no range in their scale, but suppose every man is as every other man. What is not good they call the worst, and what is not hateful, they call the best.

In like manner, what good heed Nature forms in us! She pardons no mistakes. Her yea is yea, and her nay, nay.

The first steps in Agriculture, Astronomy, Zoölogy (those first steps which the farmer, the hunter, and the sailor take), teach that Nature's dice are always loaded; that in her heaps and rubbish are concealed sure and useful results.

How calmly and genially the mind apprehends one after another the laws of physics! What noble emotions dilate the mortal as he enters into the councils of the creation, and feels by knowledge the privilege to BE! His insight refines him. The beauty of nature shines in his own breast. Man is greater that he can see this, and the universe less, because Time and Space relations vanish as laws are known.

Here again we are impressed and even daunted by the immense Universe to be explored. "What we know is a point to what we do not know." Open any recent journal of science, and weigh the problems suggested concerning Light, Heat, Electricity, Magnetism, Physiology, Geology, and judge whether the interest of natural science is likely to be soon exhausted.

Passing by many particulars of the discipline of nature, we must not omit to specify two.

The exercise of the Will, or the lesson of power, is taught in every event. From the child's successive possession of his several senses up to

the hour when he saith, "Thy will be done!" he is learning the secret that he can reduce under his will, not only particular events but great classes, nay, the whole series of events, and so conform all facts to his character. Nature is thoroughly mediate. It is made to serve. It receives the dominion of man as meekly as the ass on which the Saviour rode. It offers all its kingdoms to man as the raw material which he may mould into what is useful. Man is never weary of working it up. He forges the subtle and delicate air into wise and melodious words, and gives them wing as angels of persuasion and command. One after another his victorious thought comes up with and reduces all things, until the world becomes at last only a realized will,—the double of the man.

2. Sensible objects conform to the premonitions of Reason and reflect the conscience. All things are moral; and in their boundless changes have an unceasing reference to spiritual nature. Therefore is nature glorious with form, color, and motion; that every globe in the remotest heaven, every chemical change from the rudest crystal up to the laws of life, every change of vegetation from the first principle of growth in the eye of a leaf, to the tropical forest and antediluvian coal-mine, every animal function from the sponge up to Hercules, shall hint or thunder to man the laws of right and wrong, and echo the Ten Commandments. Therefore is Nature ever the ally of Religion—lends all her pomp and riches to the religious sentiment. Prophet and priest, David, Isaiah, Jesus, have drawn deeply from this source. This ethical character so penetrates the bone and marrow of nature, as to seem the end for which it was made. Whatever private purpose is answered by any member or part, this is its public and universal function, and is never omitted. Nothing in nature is exhausted in its first use. When a thing has served an end to the uttermost, it is wholly new for an ulterior service. In God, every end is converted into a new means. Thus the use of commodity, regarded by itself, is mean and squalid. But it is to the mind an education in the doctrine of Use, namely, that a thing is good only so far as it serves; that a conspiring of parts and efforts to the production of an end is essential to any being. The first and gross manifestation of this truth is our inevitable and hated training in values and wants, in corn and meat.

It has already been illustrated, that every natural process is a version of a moral sentence. The moral law lies at the centre of nature and radiates to the circumference. It is the pith and marrow of every substance, every relation, and every process. All things with which we deal, preach to us. What is a farm but a mute gospel? The chaff and the wheat, weeds and plants, blight, rain, insects, sun,—it is a sacred emblem from the first furrow of spring to the last stack which the snow of winter overtakes in the fields. But the sailor, the shepherd, the miner, the merchant, in their several resorts, have each an experience precisely parallel, and leading to the same conclusion because all organizations are radically alike. Nor can it be doubted that this moral sentiment which thus scents the air, grows in the grain, and impregnates the waters of the world, is caught by man and sinks into his soul. The moral influence of nature upon every individual is that amount of truth which it illustrates to him. Who can estimate this? Who can guess how much firmness the sea-beaten rock has taught the fisherman? how much tranquillity has been reflected to man from the azure sky, over whose unspotted deeps the winds forevermore drive flocks of stormy clouds, and leave no wrinkle or stain? how much industry and providence and affection we have caught from the pantomime of brutes? What a searching preacher of self-command is the varying phenomenon of Health!

Herein is especially apprehended the unity of Nature,—the unity in variety,—which meets us everywhere. All the endless variety of things make an identical impression. Xenophanes complained in his old age, that, look where he would, all things hastened back to Unity. He was weary of seeing the same entity in the tedious variety of forms. The fable of Proteus has a cordial truth. A leaf, a drop, a crystal, a moment of time, is related to the whole, and partakes of the perfection of the whole. Each particle is a microcosm, and faithfully renders the likeness of the world.

Not only resemblances exist in things whose analogy is obvious, as when we detect the type of the human hand in the flipper of the fossil saurus, but also in objects wherein there is great superficial unlikeness. Thus architecture is called "frozen music," by De Staël and Goethe. Vitruvius thought an architect should be a musi-

cian. "A Gothic church," said Coleridge, "is a petrified religion." Michael Angelo maintained, that, to an architect, a knowledge of anatomy is essential. In Haydn's oratorios, the notes present to the imagination not only motions, as of the snake, the stag, and the elephant, but colors also; as the green grass. The law of harmonic sound reappears in the harmonic colors. The granite is differenced in its laws only by the more or less of heat from the river that wears it away. The river, as it flows, resembles the air that flows over it, the air resembles the light which traverses it with more subtle currents, the light resembles the heat which rides with it through Space. Each creature is only a modification of the other; the likeness in them is more than the difference, and their radical law is one and the same. A rule of one art, or a law of one organization, holds true throughout nature. So intimate is this Unity, that, it is easily seen, it lies under the undermost garment of Nature, and betrays its source in Universal Spirit. For it pervades Thought also. Every universal truth which we express in words, implies or supposes every other truth. *Omne verum vero consonat.*⁶ It is like a great circle on a sphere, comprising all possible circles; which, however, may be drawn and comprise it in like manner. Every such truth is the absolute Ens⁷ seen from one side. But it has innumerable sides.

The central Unity is still more conspicuous in actions. Words are finite organs of the infinite mind. They cannot cover the dimensions of what is in truth. They break, chop, and impoverish it. An action is the perfection and publication of thought. A right action seems to fill the eye, and to be related to all nature. "The wise man, in doing one thing, does all, or, in the one thing he does rightly, he sees the likeness of all which is done rightly."

Words and actions are not the attributes of brute nature. They introduce us to the human form, of which all other organizations appear to be degradations. When this appears among so many that surround it, the spirit prefers it to all others. It says, "From such as this have I drawn joy and knowledge; in such as this have I found and beheld myself; I will speak to it; it can speak again; it can yield me thought already formed and alive." In fact, the eye,—the mind,—is al-

⁶ Each truth harmonizes with every other truth.

⁷ Being.

ways accompanied by these forms, male and female, and these are incomparably the richest informations of the power and order that lie at the heart of things. Unfortunately every one of them bears the marks as of some injury, is marred and superficially defective. Nevertheless, far different from the deaf and dumb nature around them, these all rest like fountain-pipes on the unfathomed sea of thought and virtue whereto they alone, of all organizations, are the entrances.

It were a pleasant inquiry to follow into detail their ministry to our education, but where would it stop? We are associated in adolescent and adult life with some friends, who, like skies and waters, are coextensive with our idea, who, answering each to a certain affection of the soul, satisfy our desire on that side; whom we lack power to put at such focal distance from us, that we can mend or even analyze them. We cannot choose but love them. When much intercourse with a friend has supplied us with a standard of excellence, and has increased our respect for the resources of God who thus sends a real person to outgo our ideal; when he has, moreover, become an object of thought, and, whilst his character retains all its unconscious effect, is converted in the mind into solid and sweet wisdom,—it is a sign to us that his office is closing, and he is commonly withdrawn from our sight in a short time.

VI. IDEALISM

Thus is the unspeakable but intelligible and practicable meaning of the world conveyed to man, the immortal pupil, in every object of sense. To this one end of Discipline, all parts of nature conspire.

A noble doubt perpetually suggests itself,—whether this end be not the Final Cause of the Universe; and whether nature outwardly exists. It is a sufficient account of that Appearance we call the World, that God will teach a human mind, and so makes it the receiver of a certain number of congruent sensations, which we call sun and moon, man and woman, house and trade. In my utter impotence to test the authenticity of the report of my senses, to know whether the impressions they make on me correspond with outlying objects, what difference does it make, whether Orion is up there in heaven, or some god paints the image in the

firmament of the soul? The relations of parts and the end of the whole remaining the same, what is the difference, whether land and sea interact, and worlds revolve and intermingle without number or end,—deep yawning under deep, and galaxy balancing galaxy, throughout absolute space,—or whether, without relations of time and space, the same appearances are inscribed in the constant faith of man? Whether nature enjoy a substantial existence without, or is only in the apocalypse of the mind, it is alike useful and alike venerable to me. Be it what it may, it is ideal to me, so long as I cannot try the accuracy of my senses.

The frivolous make themselves merry with the Ideal theory, as if its consequences were burlesque; as if it affected the stability of nature. It surely does not. God never jests with us, and will not compromise the end of nature by permitting any inconsequence in its procession. Any distrust of the permanence of laws would paralyze the faculties of man. Their permanence is sacredly respected, and his faith therein is perfect. The wheels and springs of man are all set to the hypothesis of the permanence of nature. We are not built like a ship to be tossed, but like a house to stand. It is a natural consequence of this structure, that, so long as the active powers predominate over the reflective, we resist with indignation any hint that nature is more short-lived or mutable than spirit. The broker, the wheelwright, the carpenter, the tollman, are much displeased at the intimation.

But whilst we acquiesce entirely in the permanence of natural laws, the question of the absolute existence of nature still remains open. It is the uniform effect of culture on the human mind, not to shake our faith in the stability of particular phenomena, as of heat, water, azote; but to lead us to regard nature as a phenomenon, not a substance; to attribute necessary existence to spirit; to esteem nature as an accident and an effect.

To the senses and the unrenewed understanding, belongs a sort of instinctive belief in the absolute existence of nature. In their view, man and nature are indissolubly joined. Things are ultimates, and they never look beyond their sphere. The presence of Reason mars this faith. The first effort of thought tends to relax this despotism of the senses, which binds us to nature as if we were a part of it, and shows us

nature aloof, and, as it were, afloat. Until this higher agency intervened, the animal eye sees, with wonderful accuracy, sharp outlines and colored surfaces. When the eye of Reason opens, to outline and surface are at once added grace and expression. These proceed from imagination and affection, and abate somewhat of the angular distinctness of objects. If the Reason be stimulated to more earnest vision, outlines and surfaces become transparent, and are no longer seen, causes and spirits are seen through them. The best moments of life are these delicious awakenings of the higher powers, and the reverential withdrawing of nature before its God.

Let us proceed to indicate the effects of culture.

1. Our first institution in the Ideal philosophy is a hint from Nature herself.

Nature is made to conspire with spirit to emancipate us. Certain mechanical changes, a small alteration in our local position apprizes us of a dualism. We are strangely affected by seeing the shore from a moving ship, from a balloon, or through the tints of an unusual sky. The least change in our point of view gives the whole world a pictorial air. A man who seldom rides, needs only to get into a coach and traverse his own town, to turn the street into a puppet-show. The men, the women,—talking, running, bartering, fighting,—the earnest mechanic, the lounging, the beggar, the boys, the dogs, are unrealized at once, or at least wholly detached from all relation to the observer, and seen as apparent, not substantial beings. What new thoughts are suggested by seeing a face of country quite familiar, in the rapid movement of the railroad car! Nay, the most wonted objects, (make a very slight change in the point of vision,) please us most. In a camera obscura, the butcher's cart, and the figure of one of our own family amuse us. So a portrait of a well-known face gratifies us. Turn the eyes upside down, by looking at the landscape through your legs, and how agreeable is the picture, though you have seen it any time these twenty years!

In these cases, by mechanical means, is suggested the difference between the observer and the spectacle—between man and nature. Hence arises a pleasure mixed with awe; I may say, a low degree of the sublime is felt, from the fact, probably, that man is hereby apprized that whilst the world is a spectacle, something in himself is stable.

2. In a higher manner, the poet communicates the same pleasures. By a few strokes he delineates, as on air, the sun, the mountain, the camp, the city, the hero, the maiden, not different from what we know them, but only lifted from the ground and afloat before the eye. He unfixes the land and the sea, makes them revolve around the axis of his primary thought, and disposes them anew. Possessed himself by a heroic passion, he uses matter as symbols of it. The sensual man conforms thoughts to things; the poet conforms things to his thoughts. The one esteems nature as rooted and fast, the other, as fluid, and impresses his being thereon. To him, the refractory world is ductile and flexible; he invests dust and stones with humanity, and makes them the words of the Reason. The Imagination may be defined to be the use which the Reason makes of the material world. Shakespeare possesses the power of subordinating nature for the purposes of expression, beyond all poets. His imperial muse tosses the creation like a bauble from hand to hand, and uses it to embody any caprice of thought that is uppermost in his mind. The remotest spaces of nature are visited, and the farthest sundered things are brought together, by a subtle spiritual connection. We are made aware that magnitude of material things is relative, and all objects shrink and expand to serve the passion of the poet. Thus in his sonnets, the lays of birds, the scents and dyes of flowers, he finds to be the *shadow* of his beloved; time, which keeps her from him, is his *chest*; the suspicion she has awakened, is her *ornament*;

*The ornament of beauty is Suspect,
A crow which flies in heaven's sweetest air.*⁸

His passion is not the fruit of chance; it swells, as he speaks, to a city, or a state:

*No, it was builded far from accident;
It suffers not in smiling pomp, nor falls
Under the brow of thralling discontent;
It fears not policy, that heretic,
That works on leases of short numbered hours,
But all alone stands hugely politic.*⁹

In the strength of his constancy, the Pyramids seem to him recent and transitory. The freshness of youth and love dazzles him with its resemblance to morning;

⁸ Sonnet LXX.

⁹ Sonnet CXXIV.

*Take those lips away
Which so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes,—the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn.*¹⁰

The wild beauty of this hyperbole, I may say in passing, it would not be easy to match in literature.

This transfiguration which all material objects undergo through the passion of the poet,—this power which he exerts to dwarf the great, to magnify the small,—might be illustrated by a thousand examples from his plays. I have before me the *Tempest*, and will cite only these few lines:

ARIEL. *The strong based promontory
Have I made shake, and by the spurs plucked up
The pine and cedar*¹¹

Prospero calls for music to soothe the frantic Alonso, and his companions;

*A solemn air, and the best comforter
To an unsettled fancy, cure thy brains
Now useless, boiled within thy skull.*

Again;

*The charm dissolves apace,
And, as the morning steals upon the night,
Melting the darkness, so their rising senses
Begin to chase the ignorant fumes that mantle
Their clearer reason.*

*Their understanding
Begins to swell: and the approaching tide
Will shortly fill the reasonable shores
That now lie foul and muddy.*

The perception of real affinities between events (that is to say, of *ideal* affinities, for those only are real), enables the poet thus to make free with the most imposing forms and phenomena of the world, and to assert the pre-dominance of the soul.

3. Whilst thus the poet animates nature with his own thoughts, he differs from the philosopher only herein, that the one proposes Beauty as his main end; the other Truth. But the philosopher, not less than the poet, postpones the apparent order and relations of things to the empire of thought. "The problem of philosophy," according to Plato, "is, for all that exists conditionally, to find a ground unconditioned

and absolute." It proceeds on the faith that a law determines all phenomena, which being known, the phenomena can be predicted. That law, when in the mind, is an idea. Its beauty is infinite. The true philosopher and the true poet are one, and a beauty, which is truth, and a truth, which is beauty, is the aim of both. Is not the charm of one of Plato's or Aristotle's definitions strictly like that of the Antigone of Sophocles? It is, in both cases, that a spiritual life has been imparted to nature; that the solid seeming block of matter has been pervaded and dissolved by a thought; that this feeble human being has penetrated the vast masses of nature with an informing soul, and recognized itself in their harmony, that is, seized their law. In physics, when this is attained, the memory dis-burthens itself of its cumbrous catalogues of particulars, and carries centuries of observation in a single formula.

Thus even in physics, the material is degraded before the spiritual. The astronomer, the geometer, rely on their irrefragable analysis, and disdain the results of observation. The sublime remark of Euler on his law of arches, "This will be found contrary to all experience, yet is true," had already transferred nature into the mind, and left matter like an outcast corpse.

4. Intellectual science has been observed to beget invariably a doubt of the existence of matter. Turgot said, "He that has never doubted the existence of matter, may be assured he has no aptitude for metaphysical inquiries." It fastens the attention upon immortal necessary un-created natures, that is, upon Ideas; and in their presence we feel that the outward circumstance is a dream and a shade. Whilst we wait in this Olympus of gods, we think of nature as an appendix to the soul. We ascend into their region, and know that these are the thoughts of the Supreme Being. "These are they who were set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When he prepared the heavens, they were there; when he established the clouds above, when he strengthened the fountains of the deep. Then they were by him, as one brought up with him. Of them took he counsel."¹²

Their influence is proportionate. As objects of science they are accessible to few men. Yet all men are capable of being raised by piety or by passion, into their region. And no man touches

¹⁰ *Measure for Measure*, Act IV, Scene 1.

¹¹ The speaker is not Ariel but Prospero. This quotation and the two which follow are from *The Tempest*, Act V, Scene 1.

¹² Proverbs, viii, 23, 27, 28, 30.

these divine natures, without becoming, in some degree, himself divine. Like a new soul, they renew the body. We become physically nimble and lightsome, we tread on air; life is no longer irksome, and we think it will never be so. No man fears age or misfortune or death in their serene company, for he is transported out of the district of change. Whilst we behold unveiled the nature of Justice and Truth, we learn the difference between the absolute and the conditional or relative. We apprehend the absolute. As it were, for the first time, *we exist*. We become immortal, for we learn that time and space are relations of matter; that with a perception of truth or a virtuous will they have no affinity.

5. Finally, religion and ethics, which may be fitly called the practice of ideas, or the introduction of ideas into life, have an analogous effect with all lower culture, in degrading nature and suggesting its dependence on spirit. Ethics and religion differ herein; that the one is the system of human duties commencing from man; the other, from God. Religion includes the personality of God, Ethics does not. They are one to our present design. They both put nature under foot. The first and last lesson of religion is, "The things that are seen, are temporal, the things that are unseen, are eternal." It puts an affront upon nature. It does that for the unschooled, which philosophy does for Berkeley and Viasa. The uniform language that may be heard in the churches of the most ignorant sects is,—"Contemn the unsubstantial shows of the world; they are vanities, dreams, shadows, unrealities; seek the realities of religion." The devotee flouts nature. Some theosophists have arrived at a certain hostility and indignation towards matter, as the Manichean and Plotinus. They distrusted in themselves any looking back to these flesh-pots of Egypt. Plotinus was ashamed of his body. In short, they might all say of matter, what Michael Angelo said of external beauty, "It is the frail and weary weed, in which God dresses the soul which he has called into time."

It appears that motion, poetry, physical and intellectual science, and religion, all tend to affect our convictions of the reality of the external world. But I own there is something ungrateful in expanding too curiously the particulars of the general proposition, that all culture tends to imbue us with idealism. I have

no hostility to nature, but a child's love to it. I expand and live in the warm day like corn and melons. Let us speak her fair. I do not wish to fling stones at my beautiful mother, nor soil my gentle nest. I only wish to indicate the true position of nature in regard to man, wherein to establish man all right education tends; as the ground which to attain is the object of human life, that is, of man's connection with nature. Culture inverts the vulgar views of nature, and brings the mind to call that apparent which it uses to call real, and that real which it uses to call visionary. Children, it is true, believe in the external world. The belief that it appears only, is an afterthought, but with culture this faith will as surely arise on the mind as did the first.

The advantage of the ideal theory over the popular faith is this, that it presents the world in precisely that view which is most desirable to the mind. It is, in fact, the view which Reason, both speculative and practical, that is, philosophy and virtue, take. For seen in the light of thought, the world always is phenomenal; and virtue subordinates it to the mind. Idealism sees the world in God. It beholds the whole circle of persons and things, of actions and events, of country and religion, not as painfully accumulated, atom after atom, act after act, in an aged creeping Past, but as one vast picture which God paints on the instant eternity for the contemplation of the soul. Therefore the soul holds itself off from a too trivial and microscopic study of the universal tablet. It respects the end too much to immerse itself in the means. It sees something more important in Christianity than the scandals of ecclesiastical history or the niceties of criticism; and, very incurious concerning persons or miracles, and not at all disturbed by chasms of historical evidence, it accepts from God the phenomenon, as it finds it, as the pure and awful form of religion in the world. It is not hot and passionate at the appearance of what it calls its own good or bad fortune, at the union or opposition of other persons. No man is its enemy. It accepts whatsoever befalls, as part of its lesson. It is a watcher more than a doer, and it is a doer, only that it may the better watch.

VII. SPIRIT

It is essential to a true theory of nature and of man, that it should contain somewhat progressive. Uses that are exhausted or that may be,

and facts that end in the statement, cannot be all that is true of this brave¹³ lodging wherein man is harbored, and wherein all his faculties find appropriate and endless exercise. And all the uses of nature admit of being summoned in one, which yields the activity of man an infinite scope. Through all its kingdoms, to the suburbs and outskirts of things, it is faithful to the cause whence it had its origin. It always speaks of Spirit. It suggests the absolute. It is a perpetual effect. It is a great shadow pointing always to the sun behind us.

The aspect of Nature is devout. Like the figure of Jesus, she stands with bended head, and hands folded upon the breast. The happiest man is he who learns from nature the lesson of worship.

Of that ineffable essence which we call Spirit, he that thinks most, will say least. We can foresee God in the coarse, and, as it were, distant phenomena of matter; but when we try to define and describe himself, both language and thought desert us, and we are as helpless as fools and savages. That essence refuses to be recorded in propositions, but when man has worshipped him intellectually, the noblest ministry of nature is to stand as the apparition of God. It is the origin through which the universal spirit speaks to the individual, and strives to lead back the individual to it.

When we consider Spirit, we see that the views already presented do not include the whole circumference of man. We must add some related thoughts.

Three problems are put by nature to the mind: What is matter? Whence is it? and Whereto? The first of these questions only, the ideal theory answers. Idealism saith: matter is a phenomenon, not a substance. Idealism acquaints us with the total disparity between the evidence of our own being and the evidence of the world's being. The one is perfect; the other, incapable of any assurance; the mind is a part of the nature of things; the world is a divine dream, from which we may presently awake to the glories and certainties of day. Idealism is a hypothesis to account for nature by other principles than those of carpentry and chemistry. Yet, if it only deny the existence of matter, it does not satisfy the demands of the spirit. It leaves God out of me. It leaves me in the splendid labyrinth of

my perceptions, to wander without end. Then the heart resists it, because it balks the affections in denying substantive being to men and women. Nature is so pervaded with human life that there is something of humanity in all and in every particular. But this theory makes nature foreign to me, and does not account for that consanguinity which we acknowledge to it.

Let it stand then, in the present state of our knowledge, merely as a useful introductory hypothesis, serving to apprise us of the eternal distinction between the soul and the world.

But when, following the invisible steps of thought, we come to inquire, Whence is matter? and Whereto? many truths arise to us out of the recesses of consciousness. We learn that the highest is present to the soul of man; that the dread universal essence, which is not wisdom, or love, or beauty, or power, but all in one, and each entirely, is that for which all things exist, and that by which they are; that spirit creates; that behind nature, throughout nature, spirit is present; one and not compound, it does not act upon us from without, that is, in space and time, but spiritually, or through ourselves: therefore, that spirit, that is, the Supreme Being, does not build up nature around us, but puts it forth through us, as the life of the tree puts forth new branches and leaves through the pores of the old. As a plant upon the earth, so a man rests upon the bosom of God; he is nourished by unfailing fountains, and draws, at his need, inexhaustible power. Who can set bounds to the possibilities of man? Once inhale the upper air, being admitted to behold the absolute natures of justice and truth, and we learn that man has access to the entire mind of the Creator, is himself the creator in the finite. This view, which admonishes me where the sources of wisdom and power lie, and points to virtue as to

*The golden key
Which opens the palace of eternity,¹⁴*

carries upon its face the highest certificate of truth, because it animates me to create my own world through the purification of my soul.

The world proceeds from the same spirit as the body of man. It is a remoter and inferior incarnation of God, a projection of God in the unconscious. But it differs from the body in one important respect. It is not, like that, now sub-

¹³ Fine.

¹⁴ From the opening lines of Milton's *Comus*.

jected to the human will. Its serene order is inviolable by us. It is, therefore, to us, the present expositor of the divine mind. It is a fixed point whereby we may measure our departure. As we degenerate, the contrast between us and our house is more evident. We are as much strangers in nature as we are aliens from God. We do not understand the notes of birds. The fox and the deer run away from us; the bear and tiger rend us. We do not know the uses of more than a few plants, as corn and the apple, the potato and the vine. Is not the landscape, every glimpse of which hath a grandeur, a face of him? Yet this may show us what discord is between man and nature, for you cannot freely admire a noble landscape if laborers are digging in the field hard by. The poet finds something ridiculous in his delight until he is out of the sight of men.

VIII. PROSPECTS

In inquiries respecting the laws of the world and the frame of things, the highest reason is always the truest. That which seems faintly possible, it is so refined, is often faint and dim because it is deepest seated in the mind among the eternal verities. Empirical science is apt to cloud the sight, and, by the very knowledge of functions and processes, to bereave the student of the manly contemplation of the whole. The savant becomes unpoetic. But the best read naturalist who lends an entire and devout attention to truth, will see that there remains much to learn of his relation to the world, and that it is not to be learned by any addition or subtraction or other comparison of known quantities, but is arrived at by untaught sallies of the spirit, by a continual self-recovery, and by entire humility. He will perceive that there are far more excellent qualities in the student than preciseness and infallibility; that a guess is often more fruitful than an indisputable affirmation, and that a dream may let us deeper into the secret of nature than a hundred concerted experiments.

For the problems to be solved are precisely those which the physiologist and the naturalist omit to state. It is not so pertinent to man to know all the individuals of the animal kingdom, as it is to know whence and whereto is this tyrannizing unity in his constitution, which evermore separates and classifies things, endeavoring to reduce the most diverse to one form. When I behold a rich landscape, it is less to my purpose to

recite correctly the order and superposition of the strata, than to know why all thought of multitude is lost in a tranquil sense of unity. I cannot greatly honor minuteness in details, so long as there is no hint to explain the relation between things and thoughts; no ray upon the *metaphysics* of conchology, of botany, of the arts, to show the relation of the forms of flowers, shells, animals, architecture, to the mind, and build science upon ideas. In a cabinet of natural history, we become sensible of a certain occult recognition and sympathy in regard to the most unwieldy and eccentric forms of beast, fish, and insect. The American who has been confined, in his own country, to the sight of buildings designed after foreign models, is surprised on entering York Minster or St. Peter's at Rome, by the feeling that these structures are imitations also,—faint copies of an invisible archetype. Nor has science sufficient humanity, so long as the naturalist overlooks that wonderful congruity which subsists between man and the world; of which he is lord, not because he is the most subtle inhabitant, but because he is its head and heart, and finds something of himself in every great and small thing, in every mountain stratum, in every new law of color, fact of astronomy, or atmospheric influence which observation or analysis lays open. A perception of this mystery inspires the muse of George Herbert, the beautiful psalmist of the seventeenth century. The following lines are part of his little poem on Man.

*Man is all symmetry,
Full of proportions, one limb to another,
And all to all the world besides.
Each part may call the farthest, brother;
For head with foot hath private amity,
And both with moons and tides.*

*Nothing hath got so far
But man hath caught and kept it as his prey;
His eyes dismount the highest star.
He is in little all the sphere.
Herbs gladly cure our flesh, because that they
Find their acquaintance there.*

*For us, the winds do blow,
The earth doth rest, heaven move, and fountains
flow;
Nothing we see, but means our good,
As our delight, or as our treasure;
The whole is either our cupboard of food,
Or cabinet of pleasure.*

*The stars have us to bed:
Night draws the curtain, which the sun withdraws
Music and light attend our head.
All things unto our flesh are kind,
In their descent and being, to our mind,
In their ascent and cause*

*More servants wait on man
Than he'll take notice of In every path,
He treads down that which doth befriend him
When sickness makes him pale and wan
Oh mighty love! Man is one world, and hath
Another to attend him.¹⁵*

The perception of this class of truths makes the attraction which draws men to science, but the end is lost sight of in attention to the means. In view of this half-sight of science, we accept the sentence of Plato, that "poetry comes nearer to vital truth than history." Every surmise and vaticination of the mind is entitled to a certain respect, and we learn to prefer imperfect theories, and sentences which contain glimpses of truth, to digested systems which have no one valuable suggestion. A wise writer will feel that the ends of study and composition are best answered by announcing undiscovered regions of thought, and so communicating, through hope, new activity to the torpid spirit.

I shall therefore conclude this essay with some traditions of man and nature, which a certain poet sang to me; and which, as they have always been in the world, and perhaps reappear to every bard, may be both history and prophecy.

"The foundations of man are not in matter, but in spirit. But the element of spirit is eternity. To it, therefore, the longest series of events, the oldest chronologies are young and recent. In the cycle of the universal man, from whom the known individuals proceed, centuries are points, and all history is but the epoch of one degradation.

"We distrust and deny inwardly our sympathy with nature. We own and disown our relation to it, by turns. We are like Nebuchadnezzar, dethroned, bereft of reason, and eating grass like an ox. But who can set limits to the remedial force of spirit?

"A man is a god in ruins. When men are innocent, life shall be longer, and shall pass into the immortal as gently as we awake from dreams.

¹⁵ From George Herbert's (1593-1633) "Man." Emerson has omitted stanzas 1, 2, 7, and 9.

Now, the world would be insane and rabid, if these disorganizations should last for hundreds of years. It is kept in check by death and infancy. Infancy is the perpetual Messiah, which comes into the arms of fallen men, and pleads with them to return to paradise.

"Man is the dwarf of himself. Once he was permeated and dissolved by spirit. He filled nature with his overflowing currents. Out from him sprang the sun and moon; from man the sun, from woman the moon. The laws of his mind, the periods of his actions externized themselves into day and night, into the year and the seasons. But, having made for himself this huge shell, his waters retired, he no longer fills the veins and veinlets; he is shrunk to a drop. He sees that the structure still fits him, but fits him colossally. Say, rather, once it fitted him, now it corresponds to him from far and on high. He adores timidly his own work. Now is man the follower of the sun, and woman the follower of the moon. Yet sometimes he starts in his slumber, and wonders at himself and his house, and muses strangely at the resemblance betwixt him and it. He perceives that if his law is still paramount, if still he have elemental power, if his word is sterling yet in nature, it is not conscious power, it is not inferior but superior to his will. It is instinct." Thus my Orphic poet sang.¹⁶

At present, man applies to nature but half his force. He works on the world with his understanding alone. He lives in it and masters it by a penny-wisdom; and he that works most in it is but a half-man, and whilst his arms are strong and his digestion good, his mind is imbruted, and he is a selfish savage. His relation to nature, his power over it, is through the understanding, as by manure; the economic use of fire, wind, water, and the mariner's needle, steam, coal, chemical agriculture; the repairs of the human body by the dentist and the surgeon. This is such a resumption of power as if a banished king should buy his territories inch by inch, instead of vaulting at once into his throne. Meantime, in the thick darkness, there are not wanting gleams of a better light,—occasional examples of

¹⁶ The Orphic poet is presumably Emerson himself, who often uses some real or imaginary poet as his mouthpiece. This particular passage, however, probably owes something to Bronson Alcott, who contributed "Orphic Sayings" to the *Dial* in the 1840's.

the action of man upon nature with his entire force,—with reason as well as understanding. Such examples are, the traditions of miracles in the earliest antiquity of all nations; the history of Jesus Christ; the achievements of a principle, as in religious and political revolutions, and in the abolition of the slave-trade; the miracles of enthusiasm, as those reported of Swedenborg, Hohenlohe, and the Shakers; many obscure and yet contested facts, now arranged under the name of Animal Magnetism; prayer; eloquence; self-healing; and the wisdom of children. These are examples of Reason's momentary grasp of the sceptre; the exertions of a power which exists not in time or space, but an instantaneous in-streaming causing power. The difference between the actual and the ideal force of man is happily figured by the schoolmen, in saying that the knowledge of man is an evening knowledge, *vespertina cognitio*, but that of God is a morning knowledge, *matutina cognitio*.

The problem of restoring to the world original and eternal beauty is solved by the redemption of the soul. The ruin or the blank that we see when we look at nature, is in our own eye. The axis of vision is not coincident with the axis of things, and so they appear not transparent but opaque. The reason why the world lacks unity, and lies broken and in heaps, is because man is disunited with himself. He cannot be a naturalist until he satisfies all the demands of the spirit. Love is as much its demand as perception. Indeed, neither can be perfect without the other. In the uttermost meaning of the words, thought is devout, and devotion is thought. Deep calls unto deep. But in actual life, the marriage is not celebrated. There are innocent men who worship God after the tradition of their fathers, but their sense of duty has not yet extended to the use of all their faculties. And there are patient naturalists, but they freeze their subject under the wintry light of the understanding. Is not prayer also a study of truth,—a sally of the soul into the unfound infinite? No man ever prayed heartily without learning something. But when a faithful thinker, resolute to detach every object from personal relations and see it in the light of thought, shall, at the same time, kindle science with the fire of the holiest affections, then will God go forth anew into the creation.

It will not need, when the mind is prepared

for study, to search for objects. The invariable mark of wisdom is to see the miraculous in the common. What is a day? What is a year? What is summer? What is woman? What is a child? What is sleep? To our blindness, these things seem un-affecting. We make fables to hide the baldness of the fact and conform it, as we say, to the higher law of the mind. But when the fact is seen under the light of an idea, the gaudy fable fades and shrivels. We behold the real higher law. To the wise, therefore, a fact is true poetry, and the most beautiful of fables. These wonders are brought to our own door. You also are a man. Man and woman and their social life, poverty, labor, sleep, fear, fortune, are known to you. Learn that none of these things is superficial, but that each phenomenon has its roots in the faculties and affections of the mind. Whilst the abstract question occupies your intellect, nature brings it in the concrete to be solved by your hands. It were a wise inquiry for the closet, to compare, point by point, especially at remarkable crises in life, our daily history with the rise and progress of ideas in the mind.

So shall we come to look at the world with new eyes. It shall answer the endless inquiry of the intellect,—What is truth? and of the affections,—What is good? by yielding itself passive to the educated Will. Then shall come to pass what my poet said: "Nature is not fixed but fluid. Spirit alters, moulds, makes it. The immobility or bruteness of nature is the absence of spirit; to pure spirit it is fluid, it is volatile, it is obedient. Every spirit builds itself a house, and beyond its house a world, and beyond its world a heaven. Know then that the world exists for you. For you is the phenomenon perfect. What we are, that only can we see. All that Adam had, all that Cæsar could, you have and can do. Adam called his house, heaven and earth, Cæsar called his house, Rome; you perhaps call yours, a cobbler's trade; a hundred acres of ploughed land; or a scholar's garret. Yet line for line and point for point your dominion is as great as theirs, though without fine names. Build therefore your own world. As fast as you conform your life to the pure idea in your mind, that will unfold its great proportions. A correspondent revolution in things will attend the influx of the spirit. So fast will disagreeable appearances, swine, spiders, snakes, pests, mad-houses, prisons, enemies, vanish; they are temporary and shall be no more

seen. The sordor and filths of nature, the sun shall dry up and the wind exhale. As when the summer comes from the south the snow-banks melt and the face of the earth becomes green before it, so shall the advancing spirit create its ornaments along its path, and carry with it the beauty it visits and the song which enchants it; it shall draw beautiful faces, warm hearts, wise discourse, and heroic acts, around its way, until evil is no more seen. The kingdom of man over nature, which cometh not with observation,—a dominion such as now is beyond his dream of God,—he shall enter without more wonder than the blind man feels who is gradually restored to perfect sight."

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

AN ORATION DELIVERED BEFORE THE PHI
BETA KAPPA SOCIETY, AT CAMBRIDGE,
AUGUST 31, 1837

On July 29, 1837, Emerson wrote in his *Journals*:

"If the All-wise would give me light, I should write for the Cambridge men a theory of the Scholar's office. It is not all books which it behooves him to know, least of all to be a book-worshipper, but he must be able to read in all books that which alone gives value to books—in all to read one, the one incorruptible text of Truth."

In his life of Emerson, Oliver Wendell Holmes speaks of the address as "our intellectual Declaration of Independence." "Nothing like it," he says, "had been heard in the halls of Harvard since Samuel Adams supported the affirmative of the question, 'Whether it be lawful to resist the chief magistrate, if the commonwealth cannot otherwise be preserved.'" Lowell in his essay on Thoreau refers to the oration as "an event without any former parallel in our literary annals. . . . What crowded and breathless aisles, what windows clustering with eager heads, what enthusiasm of approval, what grim silence of foregone dissent!" Among those who disapproved was the Reverend John Pierce of the class of 1793, whose reaction was that of the orthodox older generation:

"Rev. Ralph Waldo Emerson gave an oration, of 1¼ hour, on The American Scholar. It was to me in the misty, dreamy, unintelligible style of Swedenborg, Coleridge, and Carlyle. He professed to have method; but I could not trace it, except in his own annunciation. It was well spoken, and all seemed to attend, but how many were in my own predicament of making little of it I have no means of ascertaining.

Toward the close, and indeed in many parts of his discourse, he spoke severely of our dependence on British literature. Notwithstanding, I much question whether he himself would have written such an apparently incoherent and unintelligible address, had he not been familiar with the writings of the authors above named."

Bliss Perry's essay "Emerson's Most Famous Speech" (in *The Praise of Folly*) gives a vivid description of the occasion.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN, I greet you on the recommencement of our literary year. Our anniversary is one of hope, and, perhaps, not enough of labor. We do not meet for games of strength or skill, for the recitation of histories, tragedies, and odes, like the ancient Greeks; for parliaments of love and poesy, like the Troubadours; nor for the advancement of science, like our contemporaries in the British and European capitals. Thus far, our holiday has been simply a friendly sign of the survival of the love of letters amongst a people too busy to give to letters any more. As such it is precious as the sign of an indestructible instinct. Perhaps the time is already come when it ought to be, and will be, something else; when the sluggish intellect of this continent will look from under its iron lids and fill the postponed expectation of the world with something better than the exertions of mechanical skill. Our day of dependence, our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands, draws to a close.¹ The millions that around us are rushing into life, cannot always be fed on the sere remains of foreign harvests. Events, actions arise, that must be sung, that will sing themselves. Who can doubt that poetry will revive and lead in a new age, as the star in the constellation Harp, which now flames in our zenith, astronomers announce, shall one day be the pole-star for a thousand years?

In this hope I accept the topic which not only usage but the nature of our association seem to prescribe to this day,—the AMERICAN SCHOLAR. Year by year we come up hither to read one

¹ In discussing "Europe and European Books" in the *Dial* for April, 1843, Emerson wrote: "Our eyes will be turned westward and a new and stronger tone of literature will result. The Kentucky stump-oratory, the exploits of Boone and David Crockett, the journals of western pioneers, agriculturalists, and socialists, and the letters of Jack Downing, are genuine growths which are sought with avidity in Europe, where our European-like books are of no value."

more chapter of his biography Let us inquire what light new days and events have thrown on his character and his hopes.

It is one of those fables which out of an unknown antiquity convey an unlooked-for wisdom, that the gods, in the beginning, divided Man into men, that he might be more helpful to himself; just as the hand was divided into fingers, the better to answer its end.

The old fable covers a doctrine ever new and sublime; that there is One Man,—present to all particular men only partially, or through one faculty, and that you must take the whole society to find the whole man. Man is not a farmer, or a professor, or an engineer, but he is all. Man is priest, and scholar, and statesman, and producer, and soldier. In the *divided* or social state these functions are parcelled out to individuals, each of whom aims to do his stint of the joint work, whilst each other performs his. The fable implies that the individual, to possess himself, must sometimes return from his own labor to embrace all the other laborers. But, unfortunately, this original unit, this fountain of power, has been so distributed to multitudes, has been so minutely subdivided and peddled out, that it is spilled into drops, and cannot be gathered. The state of society is one in which the members have suffered amputation from the trunk, and strut about so many walking monsters,—a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but never a man.

Man is thus metamorphosed into a thing, into many things. The planter, who is Man sent out into the field to gather food, is seldom cheered by any idea of the true dignity of his ministry. He sees his bushel and his cart, and nothing beyond, and sinks into the farmer, instead of Man on the farm. The tradesman scarcely ever gives an ideal worth to his work, but is ridden by the routine of his craft, and the soul is subject to dollars. The priest becomes a form; the attorney a statute-book; the mechanic a machine; the sailor a rope of the ship.

In this distribution of functions the scholar is the delegated intellect. In the right state he is *Man Thinking*. In the degenerate state, when the victim of society, he tends to become a mere thinker, or still worse, the parrot of other men's thinking.

In this view of him, as *Man Thinking*, the theory of his office is contained. Him Nature

solicits with all her placid, all her monitory pictures; him the past instructs, him the future invites. Is not indeed every man a student, and do not all things exist for the student's behoof?

5 And, finally, is not the true scholar the only true master? But the old oracle said, "All things have two handles: beware of the wrong one." In life, too often, the scholar errs with mankind and forfeits his privilege. Let us see him in his school, and consider him in reference to the main influences he receives

I. The first in time and the first in importance of the influences upon the mind is that of nature. Every day, the sun; and, after the sunset, Night and her stars. Ever the winds blow; ever the grass grows. Every day, men and women, conversing, beholding and beholden. The scholar is he of all men whom this spectacle most engages. He must settle its value in his mind. What is nature to him? There is never a beginning, there is never an end, to the inexplicable continuity of this web of God, but always circular power returning into itself. Therein it resembles his own spirit, whose beginning, whose ending, he never can find,—so entire, so boundless. Far too as her splendors shine, system on system shooting like rays, upward, downward without centre, without circumference,—in the mass and in the particle, Nature hastens to render account of herself to the mind. Classification begins. To the young mind every thing is individual, stands by itself. By and by, it finds how to join two things and see in them one nature; then three, then three thousand; and so, tyrannized over by its own unifying instinct, it goes on tying things together, diminishing anomalies, discovering roots running under ground whereby contrary and remote things cohere and flower out from one stem. It presently learns that since the dawn of history there has been a constant accumulation and classifying of facts. But what is classification but the perceiving that these objects are not chaotic, and are not foreign, but have a law which is also a law of the human mind? The astronomer discovers that geometry, a pure abstraction of the human mind, is the measure of planetary motion. The chemist finds proportions and intelligible method throughout matter; and science is nothing but the finding of analogy, identity, in the most remote parts. The ambitious soul sits down before each refractory fact; one after another reduces all strange con-

stitutions, all new powers, to their class and their law, and goes on forever to animate the last fibre of organization, the outskirts of nature, by insight

Thus to him, to this schoolboy under the bending dome of day, is suggested that he and it proceed from one root; one is leaf and one is flower; relation, sympathy, stirring in every vein. And what is that root? Is not that the soul of his soul? A thought too bold; a dream too wild. Yet when this spiritual light shall have revealed the law of more earthly natures,—when he has learned to worship the soul, and to see that the natural philosophy that now is, is only the first groupings of its gigantic hand, he shall look forward to an ever expanding knowledge as to a becoming creator. He shall see that nature is the opposite of the soul, answering to it part for part. One is seal and one is print. Its beauty is the beauty of his own mind. Its laws are the laws of his own mind. Nature then becomes to him the measure of his attainments. So much of nature as he is ignorant of, so much of his own mind does he not yet possess. And, in fine, the ancient precept, "Know thyself," and the modern precept, "Study nature," become at last one maxim.

II. The next great influence into the spirit of the scholar is the mind of the Past,—in whatever form, whether of literature, of art, of institutions, that mind is inscribed. Books are the best type of the influence of the past, and perhaps we shall get at the truth,—learn the amount of this influence more conveniently,—by considering their value alone.

The theory of books is noble. The scholar of the first age received into him the world around; brooded thereon; gave it the new arrangement of his own mind, and uttered it again. It came into him life; it went out from him truth. It came to him short-lived actions; it went out from him immortal thoughts. It came to him business; it went from him poetry. It was a dead fact; now, it is quick thought. It can stand, and it can go. It now endures, it now flies, it now inspires. Precisely in proportion to the depth of mind from which it issued, so high does it soar, so long does it sing.

Or, I might say, it depends on how far the process had gone, of transmuting life into truth. In proportion to the completeness of the dis-

tillation, so will the purity and imperishableness of the product be. But none is quite perfect. As no air-pump can by any means make a perfect vacuum, so neither can any artist entirely exclude the conventional, the local, the perishable from his book, or write a book of pure thought, that shall be as efficient, in all respects, to a remote posterity, as to contemporaries, or rather to the second age. Each age, it is found, must write its own books; or rather, each generation for the next succeeding. The books of an older period will not fit this.

Yet hence arises a grave mischief. The sacredness which attaches to the act of creation, the act of thought, is transferred to the record. The poet chanting was felt to be a divine man henceforth the chant is divine also. The writer was a just and wise spirit: henceforward it is settled the book is perfect, as love of the hero corrupts into worship of his statue. Instantly the book becomes noxious: the guide is a tyrant. The sluggish and perverted mind of the multitude, slow to open to the incursions of Reason, having once so opened, having once received this book, stands upon it, and makes an outcry if it is disparaged. Colleges are built on it. Books are written on it by thinkers, not by Man Thinking; by men of talent, that is, who start wrong, who set out from accepted dogmas, not from their own sight of principles. Meek young men grow up in libraries, believing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon, have given, forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and Bacon were only young men in libraries when they wrote these books.

Hence, instead of Man Thinking, we have the bookworm. Hence the book-learned class, who value books, as such; not as related to nature and the human constitution, but as making a sort of Third Estate with the world and the soul. Hence the restorers of readings, the emendators, the bibliomaniacs of all degrees.

Books are the best of things, well used; abused, among the worst. What is the right use? What is the one end which all means go to effect? They are for nothing but to inspire. I had better never see a book than to be warped by its attraction clean out of my own orbit, and made a satellite instead of a system. The one thing in the world, of value, is the active soul. This every man is entitled to; this every man contains within him, although in almost all men obstructed, and as

yet unborn. The soul active sees absolute truth and utters truth, or creates. In this action it is genius; not the privilege of here and there a favorite, but the sound estate of every man. In its essence it is progressive. The book, the college, the school of art, the institution of any kind, stop with some past utterance of genius. This is good, say they,—let us hold by this. They pin me down. They look backward and not forward. But genius looks forward. the eyes of man are set in his forehead, not in his hindhead: man hopes. genius creates. Whatever talents may be, if the man create not, the pure efflux of the Deity is not his,—cinders and smoke there may be, but not yet flame. There are creative manners, there are creative actions, and creative words; manners, actions, words, that is, indicative of no custom or authority, but springing spontaneous from the mind's own sense of good and fair.

On the other part, instead of being its own seer, let it receive from another mind its truth, though it were in torrents of light, without periods of solitude, inquest, and self-recovery, and a fatal disservice is done. Genius is always sufficiently the enemy of genius by over-influence. The literature of every nation bears me witness. The English dramatic poets have Shakespearized now for two hundred years.

Undoubtedly there is a right way of reading, so it be sternly subordinated. Man Thinking must not be subdued by his instruments. Books are for the scholar's idle times. When he can read God directly, the hour is too precious to be wasted in other men's transcripts of their readings. But when the intervals of darkness come, as come they must,—when the sun is hid and the stars withdraw their shining,—we repair to the lamps which were kindled by their ray, to guide our steps to the East again, where the dawn is. We hear, that we may speak. The Arabian proverb says, "A fig tree, looking on a fig tree, becometh fruitful."

It is remarkable, the character of the pleasure we derive from the best books. They impress us with the conviction that one nature wrote and the same reads. We read the verses of one of the great English poets, of Chaucer, of Marvell, of Dryden, with the most modern joy,—with a pleasure, I mean, which is in great part caused by the abstraction of all *time* from their verses. There is some awe mixed with the joy of our

surprise, when this poet, who lived in some past world, two or three hundred years ago, says that which lies close to my own soul, that which I also had well-nigh thought and said. But for the evidence thence afforded to the philosophical doctrine of the identity of all minds, we should suppose some pre-established harmony, some foresight of souls that were to be, and some preparation of stores for their future wants, like the fact observed in insects, who lay up food before death for the young grub they shall never see.

I would not be hurried by any love of system, by any exaggeration of instincts, to underrate the Book. We all know, that as the human body can be nourished on any food, though it were boiled grass and the broth of shoes, so the human mind can be fed by any knowledge. And great and heroic men have existed who had almost no other information than by the printed page. I only would say that it needs a strong head to bear that diet. One must be an inventor to read well. As the proverb says, "He that would bring home the wealth of the Indies, must carry out the wealth of the Indies." There is then creative reading as well as creative writing. When the mind is braced by labor and invention, the page of whatever book we read becomes luminous with manifold allusion. Every sentence is doubly significant, and the sense of our author is as broad as the world. We then see, what is always true, that as the seer's hour of vision is short and rare among heavy days and months, so is its record, perchance, the least part of his volume. The discerning will read, in his Plato or Shakespeare, only that least part,—only the authentic utterances of the oracle;—all the rest he rejects, were it never so many times Plato's and Shakespeare's.

Of course there is a portion of reading quite indispensable to a wise man. History and exact science he must learn by laborious reading. Colleges, in like manner, have their indispensable office,—to teach elements. But they can only highly serve us when they aim not to drill, but to create; when they gather from far every ray of various genius to their hospitable halls, and by the concentrated fires, set the hearts of their youth on flame. Thought and knowledge are natures in which apparatus and pretension avail nothing. Gowns and pecuniary foundations, though of towns of gold, can never coun-

tervail the least sentence or syllable of wit. Forget this, and our American colleges will recede in their public importance, whilst they grow richer every year.

III. There goes in the world a notion that the scholar should be a recluse, a valetudinarian,—as unfit for any handiwork, or public labor as a penknife for an axe.¹ The so-called “practical men” sneer at speculative men, as if, because they speculate or *see*, they could do nothing. I have heard it said that the clergy,—who are always, more universally than any other class, the scholars of their day, — are addressed as women; that the rough, spontaneous conversation of men they do not hear, but only a miming and diluted speech. They are often virtually disfranchised; and indeed there are advocates for their celibacy. As far as this is true of the studious classes, it is not just and wise. Action is with the scholar subordinate, but it is essential. Without it he is not yet man. Without it thought can never ripen into truth. Whilst the world hangs before the eye as a cloud of beauty, we cannot even see its beauty. Inaction is cowardice, but there can be no scholar without the heroic mind. The preamble of thought, the transition through which it passes from the unconscious to the conscious, is action. Only so much do I know, as I have lived. Instantly we know whose words are loaded with life, and whose not.

The world,—this shadow of the soul, or *other me*,—lies wide around. Its attractions are the keys which unlock my thoughts and make me acquainted with myself. I run eagerly into this resounding tumult. I grasp the hands of those next me, and take my place in the ring to suffer and to work, taught by an instinct that so shall the dumb abyss be vocal with speech. I pierce its order; I dissipate its fear; I dispose of it within the circuit of my expanding life. So much only of life as I know by experience, so much of the wilderness have I vanquished and planted, or so far have I extended my being, my dominion. I do not see how any man can afford, for the sake of his nerves and his nap, to spare

any action in which he can partake. It is pearls and rubies to his discourse. Drudgery, calamity, exasperation, want, are instructors in eloquence and wisdom. The true scholar grudges every opportunity of action past by, as a loss of power. It is the raw material out of which the intellect moulds her splendid products. A strange process too, this by which experience is converted into thought, as a mulberry leaf is converted into satin. The manufacture goes forward at all hours.

The actions and events of our childhood and youth are now matters of calmest observation. They lie like fair pictures in the air. Not so with our recent actions,—with the business which we now have in hand. On this we are quite unable to speculate. Our affections as yet circulate through it. We no more feel or know it than we feel the feet, or the hand, or the brain of our body. The new deed is yet a part of life,—remains for a time immersed in our unconscious life. In some contemplative hour it detaches itself from the life like a ripe fruit, to become a thought of the mind. Instantly it is raised, transfigured; the corruptible has put on incorruption. Henceforth it is an object of beauty, however base its origin and neighborhood. Observe too the impossibility of antedating this act. In its grub state, it cannot fly, it cannot shine, it is a dull grub. But suddenly, without observation, the self-same thing unfurls beautiful wings, and is an angel of wisdom. So is there no fact, no event, in our private history, which shall not, sooner or later, lose its adhesive, inert form, and astonish us by soaring from our body into the empyrean. Cradle and infancy, school and playground, the fear of boys, and dogs, and ferules, the love of little maids and berries, and many another fact that once filled the whole sky, are gone already; friend and relative, profession and party, town and country, nation and world, must also soar and sing.

Of course, he who has put forth his total strength in fit actions has the richest return of wisdom. I will not shut myself out of this globe of action, and transplant an oak into a flower-pot, there to hunger and pine; nor trust the revenue of some single faculty, and exhaust one vein of thought, much like those Savoyards, who, getting their livelihood by carving shepherds, shepherdesses, and smoking Dutchmen, for all Europe, went out one day to the mountain to find

¹ Compare the passage in Emerson's journals written in March, 1845: "The only use which the country people can imagine of a scholar, the only compliment they can think of to pay him, is to ask him to deliver a Temperance Lecture, or to be a member of the School Committee."

stock, and discovered that they had whittled up the last of their pine trees. Authors we have, in numbers, who have written out their vein, and who, moved by a commendable prudence, sail for Greece or Palestine, follow the trapper into the prairie, or ramble round Algiers, to replenish their merchantable stock.

If it were only for a vocabulary, the scholar would be covetous of action. Life is our dictionary. Years are well spent in country labors; in town; in the insight into trades and manufactures, in frank intercourse with many men and women; in science; in art, to the one end of mastering in all their facts a language by which to illustrate and embody our perceptions. I learn immediately from any speaker how much he has already lived, through the poverty or the splendor of his speech. Life lies behind us as the quarry from whence we get tiles and copestones for the masonry of to-day. This is the way to learn grammar. Colleges and books only copy the language which the field and the work-yard made.

But the final value of action, like that of books, and better than books, is that it is a resource. That great principle of Undulation in nature, that shows itself in the inspiring and expiring of the breath; in desire and satiety; in the ebb and flow of the sea; in day and night; in heat and cold; and, as yet more deeply ingrained in every atom and every fluid, is known to us under the name of Polarity,—these “fits of easy transmission and reflection,” as Newton called them, are the law of nature because they are the law of spirit.

The mind now thinks, now acts, and each fit reproduces the other. When the artist has exhausted his materials, when the fancy no longer paints, when thoughts are no longer apprehended and books are a weariness,—he has always the resource *to live*. Character is higher than intellect. Thinking is the function. Living is the functionary. The stream retreats to its source. A great soul will be strong to live, as well as strong to think. Does he lack organ or medium to impart his truth? He can still fall back on this elemental force of living them. This is a total act. Thinking is a partial act. Let the grandeur of justice shine in his affairs. Let the beauty of affection cheer his lowly roof. Those “far from fame,” who dwell and act with him, will feel the force of his constitution in the doings and passages of the day better than it can

be measured by any public and designed display. Time shall teach him that the scholar loses no hour which the man lives. Herein he unfolds the sacred germ of his instinct, screened from influence. What is lost in seemliness is gained in strength. Not out of those on whom systems of education have exhausted their culture, comes the helpful giant to destroy the old or to build the new, but out of unhand-sold savage nature; out of terrible Druids and Berserkers come at last Alfred and Shakespeare.

I hear therefore with joy whatever is beginning to be said of the dignity and necessity of labor to every citizen. There is virtue yet in the hoe and the spade, for learned as well as for unlearned hands. And labor is everywhere welcome; always we are invited to work; only be this limitation observed, that a man shall not for the sake of wider activity sacrifice any opinion to the popular judgments and modes of action.

I have now spoken of the education of the scholar by nature, by books, and by action. It remains to say somewhat of his duties.

They are such as become Man Thinking. They may all be comprised in self-trust. The office of the scholar is to cheer, to raise, and to guide men by showing them facts amidst appearances. He plies the slow, unhonored, and unpaid task of observation. Flamsteed and Herschel, in their glazed observatories, may catalogue the stars with the praise of all men, and the results being splendid and useful, honor is sure. But he, in his private observatory, cataloguing obscure and nebulous stars of the human mind, which as yet no man has thought of as such,—watching days and months sometimes for a few facts; correcting still his old records;—must relinquish display and immediate fame. In the long period of his preparation he must betray often an ignorance and shiftlessness in popular arts, incurring the disdain of the able who shoulder him aside. Long he must stammer in his speech; often forego the living for the dead. Worse yet, he must accept—how often!—poverty and solitude. For the ease and pleasure of treading the old road, accepting the fashions, the education, the religion of society, he takes the cross of making his own, and, of course, the self-accusation, the faint heart, the frequent uncertainty and loss of time, which are the nettles and tangling vines in the way of the self-relying and

self-directed; and the state of virtual hostility in which he seems to stand to society, and especially to educated society. For all this loss and scorn, what offset? He is to find consolation in exercising the highest functions of human nature. He is one who raises himself from private considerations and breathes and lives on public and illustrious thoughts. He is the world's eye. He is the world's heart. He is to resist the vulgar prosperity that retrogrades ever to barbarism, by preserving and communicating heroic sentiments, noble biographies, melodious verse, and the conclusions of history. Whatsoever oracles the human heart, in all emergencies, in all solemn hours, has uttered as its commentary on the world of actions,—these he shall receive and impart. And whatsoever new verdict Reason from her inviolable seat pronounces on the passing men and events of to-day,—this he shall hear and promulgate.

These being his functions, it becomes him to feel all confidence in himself, and to defer never to the popular cry. He and he only knows the world. The world of any moment is the merest appearance. Some great decorum, some fetish of a government, some ephemeral trade, or war, or man, is cried up by half mankind and cried down by the other half, as if all depended on this particular up or down. The odds are that the whole question is not worth the poorest thought which the scholar has lost in listening to the controversy. Let him not quit his belief that a popgun is a popgun, though the ancient and honorable of the earth affirm it to be the crack of doom. In silence, in steadiness, in severe abstraction, let him hold by himself; add observation to observation, patient of neglect, patient of reproach, and bide his own time,—happy enough if he can satisfy himself alone that this day he has seen something truly. Success treads on every right step. For the instinct is sure, that prompts him to tell his brother what he thinks. He then learns that in going down into the secrets of his own mind he has descended into the secrets of all minds. He learns that he who has mastered any law in his private thoughts, is master to that extent of all men whose language he speaks, and of all into whose language his own can be translated. The poet, in utter solitude remembering his spontaneous thoughts and recording them, is found to have recorded that which men in crowded cities find true for

them also. The orator distrusts at first the fitness of his frank confessions, his want of knowledge of the persons he addresses, until he finds that he is the complement of his hearers,—that they drink his words because he fulfils for them their own nature; the deeper he dives into his privatest, secrettest presentiment, to his wonder he finds this is the most acceptable, most public, and universally true. The people delight in it; the better part of every man feels, This is my music; this is myself.

In self-trust all the virtues are comprehended. Free should the scholar be,—free and brave. Free even to the definition of freedom, “without any hindrance that does not arise out of his own constitution.” Brave; for fear is a thing which a scholar by his very function puts behind him. Fear always springs from ignorance. It is a shame to him if his tranquillity, amid dangerous times, arise from the presumption that like children and women his is a protected class; or if he seek a temporary peace by the diversion of his thoughts from politics or vexed questions, hiding his head like an ostrich in the flowering bushes, peeping into microscopes, and turning rhymes, as a boy whistles to keep his courage up. So is the danger a danger still; so is the fear worse. Manlike let him turn and face it. Let him look into its eye and search its nature, inspect its origin,—see the whelping of this lion,—which lies no great way back; he will then find in himself a perfect comprehension of its nature and extent; he will have made his hands meet on the other side, and can henceforth defy it and pass on superior. The world is his who can see through its pretension. What deafness, what stone-blind custom, what overgrown error you behold is there only by sufferance,—by your sufferance. See it to be a lie, and you have already dealt it its mortal blow.

Yes, we are the cowed,—we the trustless. It is a mischievous notion that we are come late into nature; that the world was finished a long time ago. As the world was plastic and fluid in the hands of God, so it is ever to so much of his attributes as we bring to it. To ignorance and sin, it is flint. They adapt themselves to it as they may; but in proportion as a man has any thing in him divine, the firmament flows before him and takes his signet and form. Not he is great who can alter matter, but he who can alter my state of mind. They are the kings of the

world who give the color of their present thought to all nature and all art, and persuade men by the cheerful serenity of their carrying the matter, that this thing which they do is the apple which the ages have desired to pluck, now at last ripe, and inviting nations to the harvest. The great man makes the great thing. Wherever Macdonald sits, there is the head of the table. Linnæus makes botany the most alluring of studies, and wins it from the farmer and the herb-woman; Davy, chemistry; and Cuvier, fossils. The day is always his who works in it with serenity and great aims. The unstable estimates of men crowd to him whose mind is filled with a truth, as the heaped waves of the Atlantic follow the moon.

For this self-trust, the reason is deeper than can be fathomed,—darker than can be enlightened. I might not carry with me the feeling of my audience in stating my own belief. But I have already shown the ground of my hope, in advert-
ing to the doctrine that man is one. I believe man has been wronged; he has wronged himself. He has almost lost the light that can lead him back to his prerogatives. Men are become of no account. Men in history, men in the world of to-day, are bugs, are spawn, and are called “the mass” and “the herd.” In a century, in a millen-
nium, one or two men; that is to say, one or two approximations to the right state of every man. All the rest behold in the hero or the poet their own green and crude being,—ripened; yes, and are content to be less, so *that* may attain to its full stature. What a testimony, full of grandeur, full of pity, is borne to the demands of his own nature, by the poor clansman, the poor partisan,
who rejoices in the glory of his chief. The poor and the low find some amends to their immense moral capacity, for their acquiescence in a political and social inferiority. They are content to be brushed like flies from the path of a great person, so that justice shall be done by him to that common nature which it is the dearest desire of all to see enlarged and glorified. They sun themselves in the great man’s light, and feel it to be their own element. They cast the dignity of man from their downtrod selves upon the shoulders of a hero, and will perish to add one drop of blood to make that great heart beat, those giant sinews combat and conquer. He lives for us, and we live in him.

Men such as they are, very naturally seek money or power; and power because it is as good

as money,—the “spoils,” so called, “of office.” And why not? for they aspire to the highest, and this, in their sleep-walking, they dream is highest. Wake them and they shall quit the false good and leap to the true, and leave governments to clerks and desks. This revolution is to be wrought by the gradual domestication of the idea of Culture. The main enterprise of the world for splendor, for extent, is the upbuilding of a man. Here are the materials strewn along the ground. The private life of one man shall be a more illustrious monarchy, more formidable to its enemy, more sweet and serene in its influence to its friend, than any kingdom in history. For a man, rightly viewed, comprehendeth the particular natures of all men. Each philosopher, each bard, each actor has only done for me, as by a delegate, what one day I can do for myself. The books which once we valued more than the apple of the eye, we have quite exhausted. What is that but saying that we have come up with the point of view which the universal mind took through the eyes of one scribe; we have been that man, and have passed on. First, one, then another, we drain all cisterns, and waxing greater by all these supplies, we crave a better and more abundant food. The man has never lived that can feed us ever. The human mind cannot be enshrined in a person who shall set a barrier on any one side to this unbounded, unboundable empire. It is one central fire, which, flaming now out of the lips of Etna, lightens the capes of Sicily, and now out of the throat of Vesuvius, illuminates the towers and vineyards of Naples. It is one light which beams out of a thousand stars. It is one soul which animates all men.

But I have dwelt perhaps tediously upon this abstraction of the Scholar. I ought not to delay longer to add what I have to say of nearer reference to the time and to this country.

Historically, there is thought to be a difference in the ideas which predominate over successive epochs, and there are data for marking the genius of the Classic, of the Romantic, and now of the Reflective or Philosophical age. With the views I have intimated of the oneness or the identity of the mind through all individuals, I do not much dwell on these differences. In fact, I believe each individual passes through all three. The boy is a Greek; the youth, romantic; the adult, reflective. I deny not, how-

ever, that a revolution in the leading idea may be distinctly enough traced.

Our age is bewailed as the age of Introversion. Must that needs be evil? We, it seems, are critical; we are embarrassed with second thoughts; we cannot enjoy any thing for hankering to know whereof the pleasure consists; we are lined with eyes; we see with our feet; the time is infected with Hamlet's unhappiness,—

Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.

It is so bad then? Sight is the last thing to be pitied. Would we be blind? Do we fear lest we should outsee nature and God, and drink truth dry? I look upon the discontent of the literary class as a mere announcement of the fact that they find themselves not in the state of mind of their fathers, and regret the coming state as untried; as a boy dreads the water before he has learned that he can swim. If there is any period one would desire to be born in, is it not the age of Revolution; when the old and the new stand side by side and admit of being compared; when the energies of all men are searched by fear and by hope; when the historic glories of the old can be compensated by the rich possibilities of the new era? This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.

I read with some joy of the auspicious signs of the coming days, as they glimmer already through poetry and art, through philosophy and science, through church and state.

One of these signs is the fact that the same movement which effected the elevation of what was called the lowest class in the state, assumed in literature a very marked and as benign an aspect. Instead of the sublime and beautiful, the near, the low, the common, was explored and poetized. That which had been negligently trodden under foot by those who were harnessing and provisioning themselves for long journeys into far countries, is suddenly found to be richer than all foreign parts. The literature of the poor, the feelings of the child, the philosophy of the street, the meaning of household life, are the topics of the time. It is a great stride. It is a sign—is it not?—of new vigor when the extremities are made active, when currents of warm life run into the hands and the feet. I ask not for the great, the remote, the romantic; what is doing in Italy or Arabia; what is Greek art, or Provençal minstrelsy; I embrace the common, I

explore and sit at the feet of the familiar, the low. Give me insight into to-day, and you may have the antique and future worlds. What would we really know the meaning of? The meal in the firkin; the milk in the pan; the ballad in the street; the news of the boat; the glance of the eye; the form and the gait of the body,—show me the ultimate reason of these matters, show me the sublime presence of the highest spiritual cause lurking, as always it does lurk, in these suburbs and extremities of nature; let me see every trifle bristling with the polarity that ranges it instantly on an eternal law, and the shop, the plough, and the ledger referred to the like cause by which light undulates and poets sing,—and the world lies no longer a dull miscellany and lumber-room, but has form and order; there is no trifle, there is no puzzle, but one design unites and animates the farthest pinnacle and the lowest trench.

This idea has inspired the genius of Goldsmith, Burns, Cowper, and, in a newer time, of Goethe, Wordsworth, and Carlyle. This idea they have differently followed and with various success. In contrast with their writing, the style of Pope, of Johnson, of Gibbon, looks cold and pedantic. This writing is blood-warm. Man is surprised to find that things near are not less beautiful and wondrous than things remote. The near explains the far. The drop is a small ocean. A man is related to all nature. This perception of the worth of the vulgar is fruitful in discoveries. Goethe, in this very thing the most modern of the moderns, has shown us as none ever did, the genius of the ancients.

There is one man of genius who has done much for this philosophy of life, whose literary value has never yet been rightly estimated;—I mean Emanuel Swedenborg.² The most imaginative of men, yet writing with the precision of a mathematician, he endeavored to engraft a purely philosophical Ethics on the popular Christianity of his time. Such an attempt of course must have difficulty which no genius could surmount. But he saw and showed the connection between nature and the affections of the soul. He pierced the emblematic or spiritual character of the visible, audible, tangible world. Especially did his shade-loving muse hover over and interpret the lower parts of

² Emerson's *Representative Men* (1850) contains a lecture on "Swedenborg; or, The Mystic."

nature; he showed the mysterious bond that allies moral evil to the foul material forms, and has given in epical parables a theory of insanity, of beasts, of unclean and fearful things.

Another sign of our times, also marked by an analogous political movement, is the new importance given to the single person. Every thing that tends to insulate the individual,—to surround him with barriers of natural respect, so that each man shall feel the world is his, and man shall treat with man as a sovereign state with a sovereign state,—tends to true union as well as greatness. “I learned,” said the melancholy Pestalozzi, “that no man in God’s wide earth is either willing or able to help any other man.” Help must come from the bosom alone. The scholar is that man who must take up into himself all the ability of the time, all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future. He must be an university of knowledges. If there be one lesson more than another which should pierce his ear, it is, The world is nothing, the man is all; in yourself is the law of all nature, and you know not yet how a globule of sap ascends; in yourself slumbers the whole of Reason; it is for you to know all; it is for you to dare all. Mr. President and Gentlemen, this confidence in the unsearched might of man belongs, by all motives, by all prophecy, by all preparation, to the American Scholar. We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe. The spirit of the American freeman is already suspected to be timid, imitative, tame. Public and private avarice make the air we breathe thick and fat. The scholar is decent, indolent, complaisant. See already the tragic consequence. The mind of this country, taught to aim at low objects, eats upon itself. There is no work for any but the decorous and the complaisant. Young men of the fairest promise, who begin life upon our shores, inflated by the mountain winds, shined upon by all the stars of God, find the earth below not in unison with these, but are hindered from action by the disgust which the principles on which business is managed inspire, and turn drudges, or die of disgust, some of them suicides. What is the remedy? They did not yet see, and thousands of young men as hopeful now crowding to the barriers for the career do not yet see, that if the single man plant himself indomitably on his instincts, and there abide, the huge world will come round to him. Patience,—patience;

with the shades of all the good and great for company; and for solace the perspective of your own infinite life, and for work the study and the communication of principles, the making those instincts prevalent, the conversion of the world. Is it not the chief disgrace in the world, not to be an unit;—not to be reckoned one character,—not to yield that peculiar fruit which each man was created to bear, but to be reckoned in the gross, in the hundred, or the thousand, of the party, the section, to which we belong; and our opinion predicted geographically, as the north, or the south? Not so, brothers and friends,—please God, ours shall not be so. We will walk on our own feet, we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds. The study of letters shall be no longer a name for pity, for doubt, and for sensual indulgence. The dread of man and the love of man shall be a wall of defence and a wreath of joy around all. A nation of men will for the first time exist, because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE SENIOR CLASS IN
DIVINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, SUN-
DAY EVENING, JULY 15, 1838

The *Divinity School Address*, as it is usually called, was given on the invitation of the graduating class in the Divinity College at Harvard. The faculty, who had no part in the selection of the speaker, were displeased by the speech; but the students were more favorably impressed. The youthful Theodore Parker wrote in his journal: “I shall give no abstract, so beautiful, so just and terribly sublime was his picture of the church in its present condition. My soul is roused, and this week I shall write the long-meditated sermons on the state of the church and the duties of these times.” Dr. Channing, the great Unitarian divine, so Elizabeth Peabody wrote, “regarded the address at Divinity Hall as an entirely justifiable and needed criticism on the perfunctory character of service creeping over the Unitarian churches at the time.”

In general, however, the attitude of the ministry was distinctly unfavorable. The *Address* was a minor incident in a controversy, in which, as Oliver Wendell Holmes said in his life of Emerson, “Emerson had little more than the part of Patroclus when the Greeks and Trojans fought over his body.” Writing in the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Andrews Norton—one

of the "stern old war-gods" who "shook their heads"—attacked not only Emerson but also Shelley, Cousin, Carlyle, Martineau, and Schleiermacher. This "storm in our washbowl," as Emerson described it in a letter to Carlyle, had the effect of keeping him from being invited to speak at Harvard again for nearly thirty years.

Emerson's former colleague at the Second Church, Henry Ware, Jr., preached a sermon directed in part against the doctrine that "the soul knows no persons." Emerson, instead of formally replying to the sermon, wrote to Ware one of his most significant letters

CONCORD, October 8, 1838.

MY DEAR SIR,—I ought sooner to have acknowledged your kind letter of last week, and the Sermon it accompanied. The letter was right manly and noble. The Sermon, too, I have read with attention. If it assails any doctrines of mine, perhaps I am not so quick to see it as writers generally.—certainly I did not feel any disposition to depart from my habitual contentment that you should say your thought, whilst I say mine.

I believe I must tell you what I think of my new position. It strikes me very oddly that good and wise men at Cambridge and Boston should think of raising me into an object of criticism. I have always been, from my very incapacity of methodical writing, "a chartered libertine," free to worship and free to rail; lucky when I could make myself understood, but never esteemed near enough to the institutions and mind of society to deserve the notice of the masters of literature and religion. I have appreciated fully the advantage of my position; for I well know that there is no scholar less willing or less able to be a polemic. I could not give account of myself, if challenged. I could not possibly give you one of the "arguments" you cruelly hint at, on which any doctrine of mine stands. For I do not know what arguments mean in reference to any expression of a thought. I delight in telling what I think, but if you ask how I dare say so, or why it is so, I am the most helpless of mortal men. I do not even see that either of these questions admits of an answer. So that, in the present droll posture of my affairs, when I see myself suddenly raised into the importance of a heretic, I am very uneasy when I advert to the supposed duties of such a personage, who is expected to make good his thesis against all comers.

I certainly shall do no such thing. I shall read what you and other good men write, as I have always done,—glad when you speak my thought, and skipping the page that has nothing for me. I shall go on, just as before, seeing whatever I can, and telling what I see; and, I suppose, with the same fortune that has hitherto attended me,—the joy of finding that my abler and better brothers, who work with

the sympathy of society, loving and beloved, do now and then unexpectedly confirm my perceptions, and find my nonsense is only their own thought in motley. And so I am

Your affectionate servant,

R. W. EMERSON

See Emerson's poem "Uliel" (p. 813), which in the form of a celestial parable gives Emerson's reaction to the reception of the *Address*, and note the following sentence from his journal dated August 31, 1838: "One sees in the embittered acuteness of critics, snuffing heresy from afar, their own unbelief, and that they pour forth on the innocent promulgator of a new doctrine their anger at that which they vainly resist in their own bosoms."

In an article published in the *Boston Quarterly Review* for April, 1838, the Rev. Samuel D. Robbins—three or four months before the *Address*—had expressed thoughts similar to Emerson's in language somewhat like his. See Clarence Gohdes, "Some Remarks on Emerson's *Divinity School Address*," *American Literature*, I, 27-31 (March, 1929).

Emerson's address is very far from being out of date. As Frederic I. Carpenter remarks, "The issues are as vivid now as they were in 1838—the controversy being essentially that between the Modernists and the Fundamentalists."

With the opening paragraph of the *Address*, compare the two parts of the Nineteenth Psalm, beginning respectively, "The heavens declare the glory of God . . ." and, "The law of the Lord is perfect . . ."

In this refulgent summer, it has been a luxury to draw the breath of life. The grass grows, the buds burst, the meadow is spotted with fire and gold in the tint of flowers. The air is full of birds, and sweet with the breath of the pine, the balm-of-Gilead, and the new hay. Night brings no gloom to the heart with its welcome shade. Through the transparent darkness the stars pour their almost spiritual rays. Man under them seems a young child, and his huge globe a toy. The cool night bathes the world as with a river, and prepares his eyes again for the crimson dawn. The mystery of nature was never displayed more happily. The corn and the wine have been freely dealt to all creatures, and the never-broken silence with which the old bounty goes forward has not yielded yet one word of explanation. One is constrained to respect the perfection of this world in which our senses converse. How wide; how rich; what invitation from every property it gives to every faculty of man! In its fruitful soils; in its navigable sea; in its mountains of metal and stone; in its for-

ests of all woods, in its animals, in its chemical ingredients; in the powers and path of light, heat, attraction and life, it is well worth the pith and heart of great men to subdue and enjoy it. The planters, the mechanics, the inventors, the astronomers, the builders of cities, and the captains, history delights to honor

But when the mind opens and reveals the laws which traverse the universe and make things what they are, then shrinks the great world at once into a mere illustration and fable of this mind. What am I? and What is? asks the human spirit with a curiosity new-kindled, but never to be quenched. Behold these outrunning laws, which our imperfect apprehension can see tend this way and that, but not come full circle. Behold these infinite relations, so like, so unlike; many, yet one. I would study, I would know, I would admire forever These works of thought have been the entertainments of the human spirit in all ages.

A more secret, sweet, and overpowering beauty appears to man when his heart and mind open to the sentiment of virtue. Then he is instructed in what is above him. He learns that his being is without bound; that to the good, to the perfect, he is born, low as he now lies in evil and weakness. That which he venerates is still his own, though he has not realized it yet. *He ought*¹ He knows the sense of that grand word, though his analysis fails to render account of it. When in innocency or when by intellectual perception he attains to say,—“I love the Right; Truth is beautiful within and without for evermore. Virtue, I am thine; save me, use me; thee will I serve, day and night, in great, in small, that I may be not virtuous, but virtue”;—then is the end of the creation answered, and God is well pleased.

The sentiment of virtue is a reverence and delight in the presence of certain divine laws. It perceives that this homely game of life we play, covers, under what seem foolish details, principles that astonish. The child amidst his baubles is learning the action of light, motion, gravity, muscular force; and in the game of

human life, love, fear, justice, appetite, man, and God, interact These laws refuse to be adequately stated. They will not be written out on paper, or spoken by the tongue. They elude our persevering thought; yet we read them hourly in each other's faces, in each other's actions, in our own remorse. The moral traits which are all globed into every virtuous act and thought,—in speech we must sever, and describe or suggest by painful enumeration of many particulars. Yet, as this sentiment is the essence of all religion, let me guide your eye to the precise objects of the sentiment, by an enumeration of some of those classes of facts in which this element is conspicuous

The intuition of the moral sentiment is an insight of the perfection of the laws of the soul These laws execute themselves. They are out of time, out of space, and not subject to circumstance. Thus in the soul of man there is a justice whose retributions are instant and entire. He who does a noble deed is instantly ennobled. He who does a mean deed is by the action itself contracted. He who puts off impurity, thereby puts on purity. If a man is at heart just, then in so far is he God; the safety of God, the immortality of God, the majesty of God do enter into that man with justice. If a man dissemble, deceive, he deceives himself, and goes out of acquaintance with his own being. A man in the view of absolute goodness, adores, with total humility. Every step so downward, is a step upward. The man who renounces himself, comes to himself.

See how this rapid intrinsic energy worketh everywhere, righting wrongs, correcting appearances, and bringing up facts to a harmony with thoughts. Its operation in life, though slow to the senses, is at last as sure as in the soul. By it a man is made the Providence to himself, dispensing good to his goodness, and evil to his sin. Character is always known. Thefts never enrich; alms never impoverish; murder will speak out of stone walls. The least admixture of a lie,—for example, the taint of vanity, any attempt to make a good impression, a favorable appearance,—will instantly vitiate the effect. But speak the truth, and all nature and all spirits help you with unexpected furtherance. Speak the truth, and all things alive or brute are vouchers, and the very roots of the grass underground there do seem to stir and move to bear

¹ Compare the following lines from Emerson's "Voluntaries":

So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers low, *Thou must*,
The youth replies. *I can*.

you witness. See again the perfection of the Law as it applies itself to the affections, and becomes the law of society. As we are, so we associate. The good, by affinity, seek the good; the vile, by affinity, the vile. Thus of their own volition, souls proceed into heaven, into hell.

These facts have always suggested to man the sublime creed that the world is not the product of manifold power, but of one will, of one mind; and that one mind is everywhere active, in each ray of the star, in each wavelet of the pool; and whatever opposes that will is everywhere balked and baffled, because things are made so, and not otherwise. Good is positive. Evil is merely privative, not absolute: it is like cold, which is the privation of heat.² All evil is so much death or nonentity. Benevolence is absolute and real. So much benevolence as a man hath, so much life hath he. For all things proceed out of this same spirit, which is differently named love, justice, temperance, and its different applications, just as the ocean receives different names on the several shores which it washes. All things proceed out of the same spirit, and all things conspire with it. Whilst a man seeks good ends, he is strong by the whole strength of nature. In so far as he roves from these ends, he bereaves himself of power, or auxiliaries; his being shrinks out of all remote channels, he becomes less and less, a mote, a point, until absolute badness is absolute death.

The perception of this law of laws awakens in the mind a sentiment which we call the religious sentiment, and which makes our highest happiness. Wonderful is its power to charm and to command. It is a mountain air. It is the embalmers of the world. It is myrrh and storax, and chlorine and rosemary. It makes the sky and the hills sublime, and the silent song of the stars is it. By it is the universe made safe and habitable, not by science or power. Thought may

² Emerson's attitude toward evil is generally regarded as the weakest point in his view of life. Cf. Schopenhauer's comment on Leibnitz's argument that evil is merely the absence of good as cold is the absence of heat:

"I know of no greater absurdity than that propounded by most systems of philosophy in declaring evil to be negative in its character. Evil is just what is positive; it makes its own existence felt. . . . It is the good which is negative: in other words, happiness and satisfaction always imply some desire fulfilled, some state of pain brought to an end."

work cold and intransitive in things, and find no end or unity; but the dawn of the sentiment of virtue on the heart, gives and is the assurance that Law is sovereign over all natures, and the worlds, time, space, eternity, do seem to break out into joy.

This sentiment is divine and deifying. It is the beatitude of man. It makes him illimitable. Through it, the soul first knows itself. It corrects the capital mistake of the infant man, who seeks to be great by following the great, and hopes to derive advantages *from another*,—by showing the fountain of all good to be in himself, and that he, equally with every man, is an inlet into the deeps of Reason. When he says, "I ought"; when love warms him; when he chooses, warned from on high, the good and great deed; then, deep melodies wander through his soul from Supreme Wisdom.—Then he can worship, and be enlarged by his worship; for he can never go behind this sentiment. In the sublimest flights of the soul, rectitude is never surmounted, love is never outgrown.

This sentiment lies at the foundation of society, and successively creates all forms of worship. The principle of veneration never dies out. Man fallen into superstition, into sensuality, is never quite without the visions of the moral sentiment. In like manner, all the expressions of this sentiment are sacred and permanent in proportion to their purity. The expressions of this sentiment affect us more than all other compositions. The sentences of the oldest time, which ejaculate this piety, are still fresh and fragrant. This thought dwelled always deepest in the minds of men in the devout and contemplative East; not alone in Palestine, where it reached its purest expression, but in Egypt, in Persia, in India, in China. Europe has always owed to oriental genius its divine impulses. What these holy bards said, all sane men found agreeable and true. And the unique impression of Jesus upon mankind, whose name is not so much written as ploughed into the history of this world, is proof of the subtle virtue of this infusion.

Meantime, whilst the doors of the temple stand open, day and night, before every man, and the oracles of this truth cease never, it is guarded by one stern condition; this, namely: it is an intuition. It cannot be received at second hand. Truly speaking, it is not instruction

but provocation, that I can receive from another soul. What he announces, I must find true in me, or reject; and on his word, or as his second, be he who he may, I can accept nothing. On the contrary, the absence of this primary faith is the presence of degradation. As is the flood, so is the ebb. Let this faith depart, and the very words it spake and the things it made become false and hurtful. Then falls the church, the state, art, letters, life. The doctrine of the divine nature being forgotten, a sickness infects and dwarfs the constitution. Once man was all; now he is an appendage, a nuisance. And because the indwelling Supreme Spirit cannot wholly be got rid of, the doctrine of it suffers this perversion, that the divine nature is attributed to one or two persons, and denied to all the rest, and denied with fury. The doctrine of inspiration is lost; the base doctrine of the majority of voices usurps the place of the doctrine of the soul. Miracles, prophecy, poetry, the ideal of life, the holy life, exist as ancient history merely; they are not in the belief, nor in the aspiration of society; but, when suggested, seem ridiculous. Life is comic or pitiful as soon as the high ends of being fade out of sight, and man becomes near-sighted, and can only attend to what addresses the senses.

These general views, which, whilst they are general, none will contest, find abundant illustration in the history of religion, and especially in the history of the Christian church. In that, all of us have had our birth and nurture. The truth contained in that, you, my young friends, are now setting forth to teach. As the Cultus, or established worship of the civilized world, it has great historical interest for us. Of its blessed words, which have been the consolation of humanity, you need not that I should speak. I shall endeavor to discharge my duty to you on this occasion, by pointing out two errors in its administration, which daily appear more gross from the point of view we have just now taken.

Jesus Christ belonged to the true race of prophets. He saw with open eye the mystery of the soul. Drawn by its severe harmony, ravished with its beauty, he lived in it, and had his being there. Alone in all history he estimated the greatness of man. One man was true to what is in you and me. He saw that God incarnates himself in man, and evermore goes forth anew to take possession of his World. He said, in this jubilee of

sublime emotion, "I am divine. Through me, God acts; through me, speaks. Would you see God, see me; or see thee, when thou also thinkest as I now think." But what a distortion did his doctrine and memory suffer in the same, in the next, and the following ages! There is no doctrine of the Reason which will bear to be taught by the Understanding. The understanding caught this high chant from the poet's lips, and said, in the next age, "This was Jehovah come down out of heaven. I will kill you, if you say he was a man." The idioms of his language and the figures of his rhetoric have usurped the place of his truth; and churches are not built on his principles, but on his tropes. Christianity became a Mythos, as the poetic teaching of Greece and of Egypt, before. He spoke of miracles, for he felt that man's life was a miracle, and all that man doth, and he knew that this daily miracle shines as the character ascends. But the word Miracle, as pronounced by Christian churches, gives a false impression; it is Monster. It is not one with the blowing clover and the falling rain.

He felt respect for Moses and the prophets, but no unfit tenderness at postponing their initial revelations to the hour and the man that now is, to the eternal revelation in the heart. Thus was he a true man. Having seen that the law in us is commanding, he would not suffer it to be commanded. Boldly, with hand, and heart, and life, he declared it was God. Thus is he, as I think, the only soul in history who has appreciated the worth of man.

1. In this point of view we become sensible of the first defect of historical Christianity. Historical Christianity has fallen into the error that corrupts all attempts to communicate religion. As it appears to us, and as it has appeared for ages, it is not the doctrine of the soul, but an exaggeration of the personal, the positive, the ritual. It has dwelt, it dwells, with noxious exaggeration about the *person* of Jesus. The soul knows no persons. It invites every man to expand to the full circle of the universe, and will have no preferences but those of spontaneous love. But by this eastern monarchy of a Christianity, which indolence and fear have built, the friend of man³ is made the injurer of man. The manner in which his name is surrounded with

³ When Elizabeth Peabody urged Emerson at least to put a Capital F to this phrase, Emerson answered, "If I did so, they would all go to sleep."

expressions which were once sallies of admiration and love, but are now petrified into official titles, kills all generous sympathy and liking. All who hear me, feel that the language that describes Christ to Europe and America is not the style of friendship and enthusiasm to a good and noble heart, but is appropriated and formal,—paints a demigod, as the Orientals or the Greeks would describe Osiris or Apollo. Accept the injurious impositions of our early catechetical instruction, and even honesty and self-denial were but splendid sins, if they did not wear the Christian name. One would rather be

A pagan, suckled in a creed outworn,

than to be defrauded of his manly right in coming into nature and finding not names and places, not land and professions, but even virtue and truth foreclosed and monopolized. You shall not be a man even. You shall not own the world; you shall not dare and live after the infinite Law that is in you, and in company with the infinite Beauty which heaven and earth reflect to you in all lovely forms; but you must subordinate your nature to Christ's nature; you must accept our interpretations, and take his portrait as the vulgar draw it.

That is always best which gives me to myself. The sublime is excited in me by the great stoical doctrine, Obey thyself. That which shows God in me, fortifies me. That which shows God out of me, makes me a wart and a wen. There is no longer a necessary reason for my being. Already the long shadows of untimely oblivion creep over me, and I shall de cease forever.

The divine bards are the friends of my virtue, of my intellect, of my strength. They admonish me that the gleams which flash across my mind are not mine, but God's; that they had the like, and were not disobedient to the heavenly vision. So I love them. Noble provocations go out from them, inviting me to resist evil; to subdue the world; and to Be. And thus, by his holy thoughts, Jesus serves us, and thus only. To aim to convert a man by miracles is a profanation of the soul. A true conversion, a true Christ, is now, as always, to be made by the reception of beautiful sentiments. It is true that a great and rich soul, like his, falling among the simple, does so preponderate, that, as his did, it names the world. The world seems to exist for him, and they have not yet drunk so deeply of his sense as to see that

only by coming again to themselves, or to God in themselves, can they grow forevermore. It is a low benefit to give me something, it is a high benefit to enable me to do somewhat of myself.

5 The time is coming when all men will see that the gift of God to the soul is not a vaunting, overpowering, excluding sanctity, but a sweet, natural goodness, a goodness like thine and mine, and that so invites thine and mine to be and to grow.

10 The injustice of the vulgar tone of preaching is not less flagrant to Jesus than to the souls which it profanes. The preachers do not see that they make his gospel not glad, and shear him of the locks of beauty and the attributes of heaven. When I see a majestic Epaminondas, or Washington, when I see among my contemporaries a true orator, an upright judge, a dear friend; when I vibrate to the melody and fancy of a poem; I see beauty that is to be desired. And so lovely, and yet with more entire consent of my human being, sounds in my ear the severe music of the bards that have sung of the true God in all ages. Now do not degrade the life and dialogues of Christ out of the circle of this charm, by insulation and peculiarity. Let them lie as they befell, alive and warm, part of human life and of the landscape and of the cheerful day.

2. The second defect of the traditionary and limited way of using the mind of Christ is a consequence of the first; this namely: that the Moral Nature, that Law of laws whose revelations introduce greatness—yea, God himself—into the open soul, is not explored as the fountain of the established teaching in society. Men have come to speak of the revelation as somewhat long ago given and done, as if God were dead. The injury to faith throttles the preacher; and the goodliest of institutions becomes an uncertain and inarticulate voice.

It is very certain that it is the effect of conversation with the beauty of the soul, to beget a desire and need to impart to others the same knowledge and love. If utterance is denied, the thought lies like a burden on the man. Always the seer is a sayer. Somehow his dream is told; somehow he publishes it with solemn joy; sometimes with pencil on canvas; sometimes with chisel on stone; sometimes in towers and aisles of granite, his soul's worship is builded; sometimes in anthems of indefinite music; but clearest and most permanent, in words.

The man enamored of this excellency becomes its priest or poet. The office is coeval with the world. But observe the condition, the spiritual limitation of the office. The spirit only can teach. Not any profane man, not any sensual, not any liar, not any slave can teach, but only he can give, who has, he only can create, who is. The man on whom the soul descends, through whom the soul speaks, alone can teach. Courage, piety, love, wisdom, can teach; and every man can open his door to these angels, and they shall bring him the gift of tongues. But the man who aims to speak as books enable, as synods use, as the fashion guides, and as interest commands, babbles. Let him hush.

To this holy office you propose to devote yourselves. I wish you may feel your call in throbs of desire and hope. The office is the first in the world. It is of that reality that it cannot suffer the deduction of any falsehood. And it is my duty to say to you that the need was never greater of new revelation than now. From the views I have already expressed, you will infer the sad conviction, which I share, I believe, with numbers, of the universal decay and now almost death of faith in society. The soul is not preached. The Church seems to totter to its fall, almost all life extinct. On this occasion, any complaisance would be criminal which told you, whose hope and commission it is to preach the faith of Christ, that the faith of Christ is preached.

It is time that this ill-suppressed murmur of all thoughtful men against the famine of our churches;—this moaning of the heart because it is bereaved of the consolation, the hope, the grandeur that come alone out of the culture of the moral nature,—should be heard through the sleep of indolence, and over the din of routine. This great and perpetual office of the preacher is not discharged. Preaching is the expression of the moral sentiment in application to the duties of life. In how many churches, by how many prophets, tell me, is a man made sensible that he is an infinite Soul; that the earth and heavens are passing into his mind; that he is drinking forever the soul of God? Where now sounds the persuasion, that by its very melody imparadises my heart, and so affirms its own origin in heaven? Where shall I hear words such as in elder ages drew men to leave all and follow,—father and mother, house and land, wife and child? Where

shall I hear these august laws of moral being so pronounced as to fill my ear, and I feel ennobled by the offer of my uttermost action and passion? The test of the true faith, certainly, should be its power to charm and command the soul, as the laws of nature control the activity of the hands,—so commanding that we find pleasure and honor in obeying. The faith should blend with the light of rising and of setting suns, with the flying cloud, the singing bird, and the breath of flowers. But now the priest's Sabbath has lost the splendor of nature; it is unlovely, we are glad when it is done; we can make, we do make, even sitting in our pews, a far better, holier, sweeter, for ourselves

Whenever the pulpit is usurped by a formalist, then is the worshipper defrauded and disconsolate. We shrink as soon as the prayers begin, which do not uplift, but smite and offend us. We are fain to wrap our cloaks about us, and secure, as best we can, a solitude that hears not. I once heard a preacher who sorely tempted me to say I would go to church no more. Men go, thought I, where they are wont to go, else had no soul entered the temple in the afternoon. A snow-storm was falling around us. The snow-storm was real, the preacher merely spectral, and the eye felt the sad contrast in looking at him, and then out of the window behind him into the beautiful meteor of the snow. He had lived in vain. He had no one word intimating that he had laughed or wept, was married or in love, had been commended, or cheated, or chagrined. If he had ever lived and acted, we were none the wiser for it. The capital secret of his profession, namely, to convert life into truth, he had not learned. Not one fact in all his experience had he yet imported into his doctrine. This man had ploughed and planted and talked and bought and sold; he had read books; he had eaten and drunken; his head aches, his heart throbs; he smiles and suffers; yet was there not a surmise, a hint, in all the discourse, that he had ever lived at all. Not a line did he draw out of real history. The true preacher can be known by this, that he deals out to his people his life,—life passed through the fire of thought. But of the bad preacher, it could not be told from his sermon what age of the world he fell in; whether he had a father or a child; whether he was a freeholder or a pauper; whether he was a citizen or a countryman; or any other fact of

his biography. It seemed strange that the people should come to church. It seemed as if their houses were very unentertaining, that they should prefer this thoughtless clamor. It shows that there is a commanding attraction in the moral sentiment, that can lend a faint tint of light to dulness and ignorance coming in its name and place. The good hearer is sure he has been touched sometimes, is sure there is somewhat to be reached, and some words that can reach it. When he listens to these vain words, he comforts himself by their relation to his remembrance of better hours, and so they clatter and echo unchallenged.

I am not ignorant that when we preach unworthily, it is not always quite in vain. There is a good ear, in some men, that draws supplies to virtue out of very indifferent nutriment. There is poetic truth concealed in all the common-places of prayer and of sermons, and though foolishly spoken, they may be wisely heard; for each is some select expression that broke out in a moment of piety from some stricken or jubilant soul, and its excellency made it remembered. The prayers and even the dogmas of our church are like the zodiac of Denderah and the astronomical monuments of the Hindoos, wholly insulated from anything now extant in the life and business of the people. They mark the height to which the waters once rose. But this docility is a check upon the mischief from the good and devout. In a large portion of the community, the religious service gives rise to quite other thoughts and emotions. We need not chide the negligent servant. We are struck with pity, rather, at the swift retribution of his sloth. Alas for the unhappy man that is called to stand in the pulpit, and *not* give bread of life. Everything that befalls, accuses him. Would he ask contributions for the missions, foreign or domestic? Instantly his face is suffused with shame, to propose to his parish that they should send money a hundred or a thousand miles, to furnish such poor fare as they have at home and would do well to go the hundred or the thousand miles to escape. Would he urge people to a godly way of living;—and can he ask a fellow-creature to come to Sabbath meetings, when he and they all know what is the poor uttermost they can hope for therein? Will he invite them privately to the Lord's Supper? He dares not. If no heart warm this rite, the hollow, dry, creaking formal-

ity is too plain, than that he can face a man of wit and energy and put the invitation without terror.⁴ In the street, what has he to say to the bold village blasphemer? The village blasphemer sees fear in the face, form, and gait of the minister.

Let me not taint the sincerity of this plea by any oversight of the claims of good men. I know and honor the purity and strict conscience of numbers of the clergy. What life the public worship retains, it owes to the scattered company of pious men, who minister here and there in the churches, and who, sometimes accepting with too great tenderness the tenet of the elders, have not accepted from others, but from their own heart, the genuine impulses of virtue, and so still command our love and awe, to the sanctity of character. Moreover, the exceptions are not so much to be found in a few eminent preachers, as in the better hours, the truer inspirations of all,—nay, in the sincere moments of every man. But, with whatever exception, it is still true that tradition characterizes the preaching of this country; that it comes out of the memory, and not out of the soul; that it aims at what is usual, and not at what is necessary and eternal; that thus historical Christianity destroys the power of preaching, by withdrawing it from the exploration of the moral nature of man; where the sublime is, where are the resources of astonishment and power. What a cruel injustice it is to that Law, the joy of the whole earth, which alone can make the thought dear and rich; that Law whose fatal sureness the astronomical orbits poorly emulate;—that it is travestied and depreciated, that it is behooted and behowled, and not a trait, not a word of it articulated. The pulpit in losing sight of this Law, loses its reason, and gropes after it knows not what. And for want of this culture the soul of the community is sick and faithless. It wants nothing so much as a stern, high, stoical, Christian discipline, to make it know itself and the divinity that speaks through it. Now man is ashamed of himself; he skulks and sneaks through the world, to be tolerated, to be pitied, and scarcely in a

⁴ Emerson had in 1832 given up his church because of a disagreement with his congregation in regard to the Lord's Supper, which, as his biographer Cabot states, "he found himself unable to regard as a sacrament, established by Christ, and in his name by the Church, for his followers in all ages."

thousand years does any man dare to be wise and good, and so draw after him the tears and blessings of his kind.

Certainly there have been periods when, from the inactivity of the intellect on certain truths, a greater faith was possible in names and persons. The Puritans in England and America found in the Christ of the Catholic Church and in the dogmas inherited from Rome, scope for their austere piety and their longings for civil freedom. But their creed is passing away, and none arises in its room. I think no man can go with his thoughts about him into one of our churches, without feeling that what hold the public worship had on men is gone, or going. It has lost its grasp on the affection of the good and the fear of the bad. In the country, neighborhoods, half parishes are *signing off*, to use the local term. It is already beginning to indicate character and religion to withdraw from the religious meetings. I have heard a devout person, who prized the Sabbath, say in bitterness of heart, "On Sundays, it seems wicked to go to church."⁵ And the motive that holds the best there is now only a hope and a waiting. What was once a mere circumstance, that the best and the worst men in the parish, the poor and the rich, the learned and the ignorant, young and old, should meet one day as fellows in one house, in sign of an equal right in the soul, has come to be a paramount motive for going thither.

My friends, in these two errors, I think, I find the causes of a decaying church and a wasting unbelief. And what greater calamity can fall upon a nation than the loss of worship? Then all things go to decay. Genius leaves the temple to haunt the senate or the market. Literature becomes frivolous. Science is cold. The eye of youth is not lighted by the hope of other worlds, and age is without honor. Society lives to trifles, and when men die we do not mention them.

And now, my brothers, you will ask, What in these desponding days can be done by us? The remedy is already declared in the ground of our complaint of the Church. We have contrasted the Church with the Soul. In the soul then let the redemption be sought. Wherever a man comes, there comes revolution. The old is for slaves. When a man comes, all books are legible,

⁵ Emerson wrote in his journal, December 8, 1837: "Lidian [Mrs. Emerson] says, it is wicked to go to church Sundays."

all things transparent, all religions are forms. He is religious. Man is the wonderworker. He is seen amid miracles. All men bless and curse. He saith yea and nay, only. The stationariness of religion; the assumption that the age of inspiration is past, that the Bible is closed, the fear of degrading the character of Jesus by representing him as a man;—indicate with sufficient clearness the falsehood of our theology. It is the office of a true teacher to show us that God is, not was; that He speaketh, not spake. The true Christianity,—a faith like Christ's in the infinitude of man,—is lost. None believeth in the soul of man, but only in some man or person old and departed. Ah me! no man goeth alone. All men go in flocks to this saint or that poet, avoiding the God who seeth in secret. They cannot see in secret, they love to be blind in public. They think society wiser than their soul, and know not that one soul, and their soul, is wiser than the whole word. See how nations and races flit by on the sea of time and leave no ripple to tell where they floated or sunk, and one good soul shall make the name of Moses, or of Zeno, or of Zoroaster, reverend forever. None assayeth the stern ambition to be the Self of the nation and of nature, but each would be an easy secondary to some Christian scheme, or sectarian connection, or some eminent man. Once leave your own knowledge of God, your own sentiment, and take secondary knowledge, as St. Paul's, or George Fox's, or Swedenborg's, and you get wide from God with every year this secondary form lasts, and if, as now, for centuries,—the chasm yawns to that breadth, that men can scarcely be convinced there is in them anything divine.

Let me admonish you, first of all, to go alone; to refuse the good models, even those which are sacred to the imagination of men, and dare to love God without mediator or veil. Friends enough you shall find who will hold up to your emulation Wesleys and Oberlins, Saints and Prophets. Thank God for these good men, but say, "I also am a man." Imitation cannot go above its model. The imitator dooms himself to hopeless mediocrity. The inventor did it because it was natural to him, and so in him it has a charm. In the imitator something else is natural, and he bereaves himself of his own beauty, to come short of another man's.

Yourself a newborn bard of the Holy Ghost, cast behind you all conformity, and acquaint

men at first hand with Deity. Look to it first and only, that fashion, custom, authority, pleasure, and money, are nothing to you,—are not bandages over your eyes, that you cannot see,—but live with the privilege of the immeasurable mind. Not too anxious to visit periodically all families and each family in your parish connection,—when you meet one of these men or women, be to them a divine man; be to them thought and virtue; let their timid aspirations find in you a friend, let their trampled instincts be genially tempted out in your atmosphere; let their doubts know that you have doubted, and their wonder feel that you have wondered. By trusting your own heart, you shall gain more confidence in other men. For all our penny-wisdom, for all our soul-destroying slavery to habit, it is not to be doubted that all men have sublime thoughts; that all men value the few real hours of life; they love to be heard, they love to be caught up into the vision of principles. We mark with light in the memory the few interviews we have had, in the dreary years of routine and of sin, with souls that made our souls wiser; that spoke what we thought; that told us what we knew; that gave us leave to be what we inly were. Discharge to men the priestly office, and, present or absent, you shall be followed with their love as by an angel.

And, to this end, let us not aim at common degrees of merit. Can we not leave, to such as love it, the virtue that glitters for the commendation of society, and ourselves pierce the deep solitudes of absolute ability and worth? We easily come up to the standard of goodness in society. Society's praise can be cheaply secured, and almost all men are content with those easy merits; but the instant effect of conversing with God will be to put them away. There are persons who are not actors, not speakers, but influences; persons too great for fame, for display; who disdain eloquence; to whom all we call art and artist, seems too nearly allied to show and by-ends, to the exaggeration of the finite and selfish, and loss of the universal. The orators, the poets, the commanders encroach on us only as fair women do, by our allowance and homage. Slight them by preoccupation of mind, slight them, as you can well afford to do, by high and universal aims, and they instantly feel that you have right, and that it is in lower places that they must shine. They also feel your right; for they with you are

open to the influx of the all-knowing Spirit, which annihilates before its broad noon the little shades and gradations of intelligence in the compositions we call wiser and wisest.

5 In such high communion let us study the grand strokes of rectitude, a bold benevolence, an independence of friends, so that not the unjust wishes of those who love us shall impair our freedom, but we shall resist for truth's sake the freest flow of kindness, and appeal to sympathies far in advance; and—what is the highest form in which we know this beautiful element,—a certain solidity of merit, that has nothing to do with opinion, and which is so essentially and manifestly virtue, that it is taken for granted that the right, the brave, the generous step will be taken by it, and nobody thinks of commending it. You would compliment a coxcomb doing a good act, but you would not praise an angel. 10 The silence that accepts merit as the most natural thing in the world, is the highest applause. Such souls, when they appear, are the Imperial Guard of Virtue, the perpetual reserve, the dictators of fortune. One needs not praise their courage,—they are the heart and soul of nature. 15 O my friends, there are resources in us on which we have not drawn. There are men who rise refreshed on hearing a threat; men to whom a crisis which intimidates and paralyzes the majority,—demanding not the faculties of prudence and thrift, but comprehension, immovableness, the readiness of sacrifice,—comes graceful and beloved as a bride. Napoleon said of Massena, that he was not himself until the battle began 20 to go against him; then, when the dead began to fall in ranks around him, awoke his powers of combination, and he put on terror and victory as a robe. So it is in rugged crises, in unwearable endurance, and in aims which put sympathy out of the question, that the angel is shown. But these are heights that we can scarce remember and look up to without contrition and shame. Let us thank God that such things exist.

And now let us do what we can to rekindle the smouldering, nigh quenched fire on the altar. 25 The evils of the church that now is are manifest. The question returns, What shall we do? I confess, all attempts to project and establish a Cultus with new rites and forms, seem to me vain. Faith makes us, and not we it, and faith makes its own forms. All attempts to contrive a system are as cold as the new worship introduced by the 30

French to the goddess of Reason,—to-day, paste-board and filigree, and ending to-morrow in madness and murder. Rather let the breath of new life be breathed by you through the forms already existing. For if once you are alive, you shall find they shall become plastic and new. The remedy to their deformity is first, soul, and second, soul, and evermore, soul. A whole pope-dom of forms one pulsation of virtue can uplift and vivify. Two inestimable advantages Christianity has given us; first the Sabbath, the jubilee of the whole world, whose light dawns welcome alike into the closet of the philosopher, into the garret of toil, and into prison-cells, and everywhere suggests, even to the vile, the dignity of spiritual being. Let it stand forevermore, a temple, which new love, new faith, new sight shall restore to more than its first splendor to mankind. And secondly, the institution of preaching,—the speech of man to man,—essentially the most flexible of all organs, of all forms. What hinders that now, everywhere, in pulpits, in lecture-rooms, in houses, in fields, wherever the invitation of men or your own occasions lead you, you speak the very truth, as your life and conscience teach it, and cheer the waiting, fainting hearts of men with new hope and new revelation?

I look for the hour when that supreme Beauty which ravished the souls of those Eastern men, and chiefly of those Hebrews, and through their lips spoke oracles to all time, shall speak in the West also. The Hebrew and Greek Scriptures contain immortal sentences, that have been bread of life to millions. But they have no epical integrity; are fragmentary; are not shown in their order to the intellect. I look for the new Teacher that shall follow so far those shining laws that he shall see them come full circle; shall see their rounding complete grace; shall see the world to be the mirror of the soul; shall see the identity of the law of gravitation with purity of heart; and shall show that the Ought, that Duty, is one thing with Science, with Beauty, and with Joy.

SELF-RELIANCE

(1841)

The essay appeared in Emerson's first series of *Essays* (1841). Edward W. Emerson remarks: "In reading this essay, it is well to call to mind, 1st, Mr.

Emerson's fear of weakening the effect of his presentation by qualification, 2d, That the Self he refers to is the higher self, man's share of divinity. Hence 'The Over-Soul' should be read after 'Self-Reliance.' " The connection between the ideas set forth in these two essays is suggested by Emerson's statement—in an address delivered before the Anti-Slavery Society in New York, March 7, 1854—that one comes at last to learn "that self-reliance, the height and perfection of man, is reliance on God "

"*Ne te quæviseris extra*"¹

*Man is his own star; and the soul that can
Render an honest and a perfect man,
Commands all light, all influence, all fate;
Nothing to him falls early or too late.
Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still.*

Epilogue to Beaumont and Fletcher's
Honest Man's Fortune.

*Cast the bantling on the rocks,
Suckle him with the she-wolf's teat,
Wintered with the hawk and fox,
Power and speed be hands and feet.*

I read the other day some verses written by an eminent painter² which were original and not conventional. The soul always hears an admonition in such lines, let the subject be what it may. The sentiment they instil is of more value than any thought they may contain. To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men,—that is genius. Speak your latent conviction, and it shall be the universal sense; for the inmost in due time becomes the outmost, and our first thought is rendered back to us by the trumpets of the Last Judgment. Familiar as the voice of the mind is to each, the highest merit we ascribe to Moses, Plato and Milton is that they set at naught books and traditions, and spoke not what men, but what *they* thought. A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the lustre of the firmament of bards and sages. Yet he dismisses without notice his thought, because it is his. In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts; they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty. Great works of art have no more affecting lesson for us than this. They teach us to abide by our spontaneous impression with good-

¹ Do not look outside thyself.

² Probably Washington Allston, who was a poet as well as a painter.

humored inflexibility then most when the whole cry of voices is on the other side. Else to-morrow a stranger will say with masterly good sense precisely what we have thought and felt all the time, and we shall be forced to take with shame our own opinion from another.

There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better for worse as his portion, that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till. The power which resides in him is new in nature, and none but he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know until he has tried. Not for nothing one face, one character, one fact, makes much impression on him, and another none. This sculpture in the memory is not without preëstablished harmony. The eye was placed where one ray should fall, that it might testify of that particular ray. We but half express ourselves, and are ashamed of that divine idea which each of us represents. It may be safely trusted as proportionate and of good issues, so it be faithfully imparted, but God will not have his work made manifest by cowards. A man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best; but what he has said or done otherwise shall give him no peace. It is a deliverance which does not deliver. In the attempt his genius deserts him; no muse befriends; no intention, no hope.

Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events. Great men have always done so, and confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being. And we are now men, and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny; and not minors and invalids in a protected corner, not cowards fleeing before a revolution, but guides, redeemers, and benefactors, obeying the Almighty effort and advancing on Chaos and the Dark.

What pretty oracles nature yields us on this text in the face and behavior of children, babes, and even brutes! That divided and rebel mind,

that distrust of a sentiment because our arithmetic has computed the strength and means opposed to our purpose, these have not. Their mind being whole, their eye is as yet unconquered, and when we look in their faces we are disconcerted. Infancy conforms to nobody; all conform to it, so that one babe commonly makes four or five out of the adults who prattle and play to it. So God has armed youth and puberty and manhood no less with its own piquancy and charm, and made it enviable and gracious and its claims not to be put by, if it will stand by itself. Do not think the youth has no force, because he cannot speak to you and me. Hark! in the next room his voice is sufficiently clear and emphatic. It seems he knows how to speak to his contemporaries. Bashful or bold then, he will know how to make us seniors very unnecessary.

The nonchalance of boys who are sure of a dinner, and would disdain as much as a lord to do or say aught to conciliate one, is the healthy attitude of human nature. A boy is in the parlor what the pit is in the playhouse; independent, irresponsible, looking out from his corner on such people and facts as pass by, he tries and sentences them on their merits, in the swift, summary way of boys, as good, bad, interesting, silly, eloquent, troublesome. He cumbers himself never about consequences, about interests; he gives an independent, genuine verdict. You must court him; he does not court you. But the man is as it were clapped into jail by his consciousness. As soon as he has once acted or spoken with *éclat* he is a committed person, watched by the sympathy or the hatred of hundreds, whose affections must now enter into his account. There is no Lethe for this. Ah, that he could pass again into his neutrality! Who can thus avoid all pledges and, having observed, observe again from the same unaffected, unbiased, unbribable, unaffrighted innocence,—must always be formidable. He would utter opinions on all passing affairs, which being seen to be not private but necessary, would sink like darts into the ear of men and put them in fear.

These are the voices which we hear in solitude, but they grow faint and inaudible as we enter into the world. Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members. Society is a joint-stock company, in which the members agree, for the better securing of his bread to each shareholder, to sur-

render the liberty and culture of the eater. The virtue in most request is conformity. Self-reliance is its aversion. It loves not realities and creators, but names and customs.

Whoso would be a man, must be a non-conformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world. I remember an answer which when quite young I was prompted to make to a valued adviser who was wont to importune me with the dear old doctrines of the church. On my saying, "What have I to do with the sacredness of traditions, if I live wholly from within?" my friend suggested,—"But these impulses may be from below, not from above." I replied, "They do not seem to me to be such; but if I am the Devil's child, I will live then from the Devil." No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature. Good and bad are but names very readily transferable to that or this; the only right is what is after my constitution; the only wrong what is against it. A man is to carry himself in the presence of all opposition as if everything were titular and ephemeral but he. I am ashamed to think how easily we capitulate to badges and names, to large societies and dead institutions. Every decent and well-spoken individual affects and sways me more than is right. I ought to go upright and vital, and speak the rude truth in all ways. If malice and vanity wear the coat of philanthropy, shall that pass? If an angry bigot assumes this bountiful cause of Abolition, and comes to me with his last news from Barbadoes, why should I not say to him, "Go love thy infant; love thy wood-chopper; be good-natured and modest; have that grace; and never varnish your hard, uncharitable ambition with this incredible tenderness for black folk a thousand miles off. Thy love afar is spite at home." Rough and graceless would be such greeting, but truth is handsomer than the affectation of love. Your goodness must have some edge to it,—else it is none. The doctrine of hatred must be preached, as the counteraction of the doctrine of love, when that pulses and whines. I shun father and mother and wife and brother when my genius calls me. I would write on the lintels of the door-post, *Whim*. I hope it is somewhat better than whim at last, but we cannot spend the

day in explanation. Expect me not to show cause why I seek or why I exclude company. Then again, do not tell me, as a good man did to-day, of my obligation to put all poor men in good situations. Are they *my* poor? I tell thee, thou foolish philanthropist, that I grudge the dollar, the dime, the cent I give to such men as do not belong to me and to whom I do not belong. There is a class of persons to whom by all spiritual affinity I am bought and sold; for them I will go to prison if need be; but your miscellaneous popular charities; the education at college of fools; the building of meeting-houses to the vain end to which many now stand; alms to sots, and the thousand-fold Relief Societies;—though I confess with shame I sometimes succumb and give the dollar, it is a wicked dollar, which by and by I shall have the manhood to withhold.

Virtues are, in the popular estimate, rather the exception than the rule. There is the man *and* his virtues. Men do what is called a good action, as some piece of courage or charity, much as they would pay a fine in expiation of daily non-appearance on parade. Their works are done as an apology or extenuation of their living in the world,—as invalids and the insane pay a high board. Their virtues are penances. I do not wish to expiate, but to live. My life is for itself and not for a spectacle. I much prefer that it should be of a lower strain, so it be genuine and equal, than that it should be glittering and unsteady. I wish it to be sound and sweet, and not to need diet and bleeding. I ask primary evidence that you are a man and refuse this appeal from the man to his actions. I know that for myself it makes no difference whether I do or forbear those actions which are reckoned excellent. I cannot consent to pay for a privilege where I have intrinsic right. Few and mean as my gifts may be, I actually am, and do not need for my own assurance or the assurance of my fellows any secondary testimony.

What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think. This rule, equally arduous in actual and intellectual life, may serve for the whole distinction between greatness and meanness. It is the harder because you will always find those who think they know what is your duty better than you know it. It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the

great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

The objection to conforming to usages that have become dead to you is that it scatters your force. It loses your time and blurs the impression of your character. If you maintain a dead church, contribute to a dead Bible-society, vote with a great party either for the government or against it, spread your table like base house-keepers,—under all these screens I have difficulty to detect the precise man you are: and of course so much force is withdrawn from all your proper life. But do your work, and I shall know you. Do your work, and you shall reinforce yourself. A man must consider what a blind-man's-buff is this game of conformity. If I know your sect I anticipate your argument. I hear a preacher announce for his text and topic the expediency of one of the institutions of his church. Do I not know beforehand that not possibly can he say a new and spontaneous word? Do I not know that with all this ostentation of examining the grounds of the institution he will do no such thing? Do I not know that he is pledged to himself not to look but at one side, the permitted side, not as a man, but as a parish minister? He is a retained attorney, and these airs of the bench are the emptiest affectation. Well, most men have bound their eyes with one or another handkerchief, and attached themselves to some one of these communities of opinion. This conformity makes them not false in a few particulars, authors of a few lies, but false in all particulars. Their every truth is not quite true. Their two is not the real two, their four not the real four; so that every word they say chagrins us and we know not where to begin to set them right. Meantime nature is not slow to equip us in the prison-uniform of the party to which we adhere. We come to wear one cut of face and figure, and acquire by degrees the gentlest asinine expression. There is a mortifying experience in particular, which does not fail to wreak itself also in the general history; I mean the "foolish face of praise," the forced smile which we put on in company where we do not feel at ease, in answer to conversation which does not interest us. The muscles, not spontaneously moved but moved by a low usurping wilfulness, grow tight about the outline of the face, with the most disagreeable sensation.

For nonconformity the world whips you with its displeasure. And therefore a man must know how to estimate a sour face. The by-standers look askance on him in the public street or in the friend's parlor. If this aversion had its origin in contempt and resistance like his own he might well go home with a sad countenance, but the sour faces of the multitude, like their sweet faces, have no deep cause, but are put on and off as the wind blows and a newspaper directs. Yet is the discontent of the multitude more formidable than that of the senate and the college. It is easy enough for a firm man who knows the world to brook the rage of the cultivated classes. Their rage is decorous and prudent, for they are timid, as being very vulnerable themselves. But when to their feminine rage the indignation of the people is added, when the ignorant and the poor are aroused, when the unintelligent brute force that lies at the bottom of society is made to growl and mow, it needs the habit of magnanimity and religion to treat it godlike as a trifle of no concernment.

The other terror that scares us from self-trust is our consistency; a reverence for our past act or word because the eyes of others have no other data for computing our orbit than our past acts, and we are loth to disappoint them.

But why should you keep your head over your shoulder? Why drag about this corpse of your memory, lest you contradict somewhat you have stated in this or that public place? Suppose you should contradict yourself; what then? It seems to be a rule of wisdom never to rely on your memory alone, scarcely even in acts of pure memory, but to bring the past for judgment into the thousand-eyed present, and live ever in a new day. In your metaphysics you have denied personality to the Deity, yet when the devout motions of the soul come, yield to them heart and life, though they should clothe God with shape and color. Leave your theory, as Joseph his coat in the hand of the harlot and flee.

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers, and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do.³ He may as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall. Speak

³ Compare Walt Whitman in "Song of Myself":
Do I contradict myself?
Very well then I contradict myself,
(I am large, I contain multitudes.)

what you think now in hard words and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you said to-day.—“Ah, so you shall be sure to be misunderstood.”—Is it so bad then to be mis-
 5 understood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood.

I suppose no man can violate his nature. All the sallies of his will are rounded in by the law of his being, as the inequalities of Andes and Himmaleh are insignificant in the curve of the sphere. Nor does it matter how you gauge and try him. A character is like an acrostic or Alexandrian stanza,—read it forward, backward, or across, it still spells the same thing. In this pleasing contrite wood-life which God allows me, let me record day by day my honest thought without prospect or retrospect, and, I cannot doubt, it will be found symmetrical, though I mean it not and see it not. My book should smell of pines and resound with the hum of insects. The swallow over my window should interweave that thread or straw he carries in his bill into my web also. We pass for what we are. Character teaches above our wills. Men imagine that they communicate their virtue or vice only by overt actions, and do not see that virtue or vice emit
 10 a breath every moment.

There will be an agreement in whatever variety of actions, so they be each honest and natural in their hour. For of one will, the actions will be harmonious, however unlike they seem. These varieties are lost sight of at a little distance, at a little height of thought. One tendency unites them all. The voyage of the best ship is a zigzag line of a hundred tacks. See the line from a sufficient distance, and it straightens itself to the average tendency. Your genuine action will explain itself and will explain your other genuine actions. Your conformity explains nothing. Act singly, and what you have already done singly will justify you now. Greatness appeals to the future. If I can be firm enough to-day to do right and scorn eyes, I must have done so much right before as to defend me now. Be it how it will, do right now. Always scorn appearances and you always may. The force of character is cumulative. All the fore-
 15 gone days of virtue work their health into this.

What makes the majesty of the heroes of the senate and the field, which so fills the imagination? The consciousness of a train of great days and victories behind. They shed a united light
 5 on the advancing actor. He is attended as by a visible escort of angels. That is it which throws thunder into Chatham's voice, and dignity into Washington's port, and America into Adams's eye. Honor is venerable to us because it is no ephemera. It is always ancient virtue. We worship it to-day because it is not of to-day. We love it and pay it homage because it is not a trap for our love and homage, but is self-dependent, self-derived, and therefore of an old immaculate pedigree, even if shown in a young person.

I hope in these days we have heard the last of conformity and consistency. Let the words be gazetted and ridiculous henceforward. Instead of the gong for dinner, let us hear a whistle from the Spartan fife. Let us never bow and apologize more. A great man is coming to eat at my house. I do not wish to please him; I wish that he should wish to please me. I will stand here for humanity, and though I would make it kind, I would make it true. Let us affront and reprimand the smooth mediocrity and squalid contentment of the times, and hurl in the face of custom and trade and office, the fact which is the upshot of all history, that there is a great responsible Thinker and Actor working wherever a man works; that a true man belongs to no other time or place, but is the centre of things. Where he is, there is nature. He measures you and all men and all events. Ordinarily, every body in society reminds us of somewhat else, or of some other person. Character, reality, reminds you of nothing else; it takes place of the whole creation. The man must be so much that he must make all circumstances indifferent. Every true man is a cause, a country, and an age; requires infinite spaces and numbers and time fully to accomplish his design;—and posterity seem to follow his steps as a train of clients. A man Cæsar is born, and for ages after we have a Roman Empire. Christ is born, and millions of minds so grow and cleave to his genius that he is confounded with virtue and the possible of man. An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man; as, Monachism, of the Hermit Antony; the Reformation, of Luther; Quakerism, of Fox; Methodism, of Wesley; Abolition, of Clarkson. Scipio,
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Milton called "the height of Rome", and all history resolves itself very easily into the biography of a few stout and earnest persons.

Let a man then know his worth, and keep things under his feet. Let him not peep or steal, or skulk up and down with the air of a charity-boy, a bastard, or an interloper in the world which exists for him. But the man in the street, finding no worth in himself which corresponds to the force which built a tower or sculptured a marble god, feels poor when he looks on these. To him a palace, a statue, or a costly book have an alien and forbidding air, much like a gay equipage, and seem to say like that, "Who are you, Sir?" Yet they all are his, suitors for his notice, petitioners to his faculties that they will come out and take possession. The picture waits for my verdict; it is not to command me, but I am to settle its claims to praise. That popular fable⁴ of the sot who was picked up dead-drunk in the street, carried to the duke's house, washed and dressed and laid in the duke's bed, and, on his waking, treated with all obsequious ceremony like the duke, and assured that he had been insane, owes its popularity to the fact that it symbolizes so well the state of man, who is in the world a sort of sot, but now and then wakes up, exercises his reason and finds himself a true prince.

Our reading is mendicant and sycophantic. In history our imagination plays us false. Kingdom and lordship, power and estate, are a gaudier vocabulary than private John and Edward in a small house and common day's work; but the things of life are the same to both; the sum total of both is the same. Why all this deference to Alfred and Scanderbeg and Gustavus? Suppose they were virtuous; did they wear out virtue? As great a stake depends on your private act to-day as followed their public and renowned steps. When private men shall act with original views, the lustre will be transferred from the actions of kings to those of gentlemen.

The world has been instructed by its kings, who have so magnetized the eyes of nations. It has been taught by this colossal symbol the mutual reverence that is due from man to man. The joyful loyalty with which men have everywhere suffered the king, the noble, or the great

proprietor to walk among them by a law of his own, make his own scale of men and things and reverse theirs, pay for benefits not with money but with honor, and represent the law in his person, was the hieroglyphic by which they obscurely signified their consciousness of their own right and comeliness, the right of every man.

The magnetism which all original action exerts is explained when we inquire the reason of self-trust. Who is the Trustee? What is the aboriginal Self, on which a universal reliance may be grounded? What is the nature and power of that science-baffling star, without parallax, without calculable elements, which shoots a ray of beauty even into trivial and impure actions, if the least mark of independence appear? The inquiry leads us to that source, at once the essence of genius, of virtue, and of life, which we call Spontaneity or Instinct. We denote this primary wisdom as Intuition, whilst all later teachings are tuition. In that deep force, the last fact behind which analysis cannot go, all things find their common origin. For the sense of being which in calm hours rises, we know not how, in the soul, is not diverse from things, from space, from light, from time, from man, but one with them and proceeds obviously from the same source whence their life and being also proceed. We first share the life by which things exist and afterwards see them as appearances in nature and forget that we have shared their cause. Here is the fountain of action and of thought. Here are the lungs of that inspiration which giveth man wisdom and which cannot be denied without impiety and atheism. We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, which makes us receivers of its truth and organs of its activity. When we discern justice, when we discern truth, we do nothing of ourselves, but allow a passage to its beams. If we ask whence this comes, if we seek to pry into the soul that causes, all philosophy is at fault. Its presence or its absence is all we can affirm. Every man discriminates between the voluntary acts of his mind and his involuntary perceptions, and knows that to his involuntary perceptions a perfect faith is due. He may err in the expression of them, but he knows that these things are so, like day and night, not to be disputed. My wilful actions and acquisitions are but roving;—the idlest reverie, the faintest native emotion, command

⁴ Perhaps Emerson refers to the opening portion of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*.

my curiosity and respect. Thoughtless people contradict as readily the statement of perceptions as of opinions, or rather much more readily; for they do not distinguish between perception and notion. They fancy that I choose to see this or that thing. But perception is not whimsical, but fatal. If I see a trait, my children will see it after me, and in course of time all mankind,—although it may chance that no one has seen it before me. For my perception of it is as much a fact as the sun.

The relations of the soul to the divine spirit are so pure that it is profane to seek to interpose helps. It must be that when God speaketh he should communicate, not one thing, but all things; should fill the world with his voice; should scatter forth light, nature, time, souls, from the centre of the present thought, and new date and new create the whole. Whenever a mind is simple and receives a divine wisdom, old things pass away,—means, teachers, texts, temples fall; it lives now, and absorbs past and future into the present hour. All things are made sacred by relation to it,—one as much as another. All things are dissolved to their centre by their cause, and in the universal miracle petty and particular miracles disappear. If therefore a man claims to know and speak of God and carries you backward to the phraseology of some old mouldered nation in another country, in another world, believe him not. Is the acorn better than the oak which is its fulness and completion? Is the parent better than the child into whom he has cast his ripened being? Whence then this worship of the past? The centuries are conspirators against the sanity and authority of the soul! Time and space are but physiological colors which the eye makes, but the soul is light: where it is, is day; where it was, is night; and history is an impertinence and an injury if it be anything more than a cheerful apologue or parable of my being and becoming.

Man is timid and apologetic; he is no longer upright; he dares not say "I think," "I am," but quotes some saint or sage. He is ashamed before the blade of grass or the blowing rose. These roses under my window make no reference to former roses or to better ones; they are for what they are; they exist with God to-day. There is no time to them. There is simply the rose; it is perfect in every moment of its existence. Before a leaf-bud has burst, its whole life acts; in the

full-blown flower there is no more; in the leafless root there is no less. Its nature is satisfied and it satisfies nature in all moments alike. But man postpones or remembers, he does not live in the present, but with reverted eye laments the past, or, heedless of riches that surround him, stands on tiptoe to foresee the future. He cannot be happy and strong until he too lives with nature in the present, above time.

This should be plain enough. Yet see what strong intellects dare not yet hear God himself unless he speak the phraseology of I know not what David, or Jeremiah, or Paul. We shall not always set so great a price on a few texts, on a few lives. We are like children who repeat by rote the sentences of grandames and tutors, and, as they grow older, of the men of talents and character they chance to see,—painfully recollecting the exact words they spoke; afterwards, when they come into the point of view which those had who uttered these sayings, they understand them and are willing to let the words go; for at any time they can use words as good when occasion comes. If we live truly, we shall see truly. It is as easy for the strong man to be strong, as it is for the weak to be weak. When we have new perception, we shall gladly disburden the memory of its hoarded treasures as old rubbish. When a man lives with God, his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn.

And now at last the highest truth on this subject remains unsaid; probably cannot be said; for all that we say is the far-off remembering of the intuition. That thought by what I can now nearest approach to say it, is this. When good is near you, when you have life in yourself, it is not by any known or accustomed way; you shall not discern the footprints of any other; you shall not see the face of man; you shall not hear any name;—the way, the thought, the good, shall be wholly strange and new. It shall exclude example and experience. You take the way from man, not to man. All persons that ever existed are its forgotten ministers. Fear and hope are alike beneath it. There is somewhat low even in hope. In the hour of vision there is nothing that can be called gratitude, nor properly joy. The soul raised over passion beholds identity and eternal causation, perceives the self-existence of Truth and Right, and calms itself with knowing that all things go well. Vast

spaces of nature, the Atlantic Ocean, the South Sea; long intervals of time, years, centuries, are of no account. This which I think and feel underlay every former state of life and circumstances, as it does underlie my present, and what is called life and what is called death.

Life only avails, not the having lived. Power ceases in the instant of repose; it resides in the moment of transition from a past to a new state, in the shooting of the gulf, in the darting to an aim. This one fact the world hates; that the soul *becomes*; for that forever degrades the past, turns all riches to poverty, all reputation to a shame, confounds the saint with the rogue, shoves Jesus and Judas equally aside. Why then do we prate of self-reliance? Inasmuch as the soul is present there will be power not confident but agent. To talk of reliance is a poor external way of speaking. Speak rather of that which relies because it works and is. Who has more obedience than I masters me, though he should not raise his finger. Round him I must revolve by the gravitation of spirits. We fancy it rhetoric when we speak of eminent virtue. We do not yet see that virtue is Height, and that a man or a company of men, plastic and permeable to principles, by the law of nature must overpower and ride all cities, nations, kings, rich men, poets, who are not.

This is the ultimate fact which we so quickly reach on this, as on every topic, the resolution of all into the ever-blessed ONE. Self-existence is the attribute of the Supreme Cause, and it constitutes the measure of good by the degree in which it enters into all lower forms. All things real are so by so much virtue as they contain. Commerce, husbandry, hunting, whaling, war, eloquence, personal weight, are somewhat, and engage my respect as examples of its presence and impure action. I see the same law working in nature for conservation and growth. Power is, in nature, the essential measure of right. Nature suffers nothing to remain in her kingdoms which cannot help itself. The genesis and maturation of a planet, its poise and orbit, the bended tree recovering itself from the strong wind, the vital resources of every animal and vegetable, are demonstrations of the self-sacrificing and therefore self-relying soul.

Thus all concentrates: let us not rove; let us sit at home with the cause. Let us stun and astonish the intruding rabble of men and books

and institutions by a simple declaration of the divine fact. Bid the invaders take the shoes from off their feet, for God is here within. Let our simplicity judge them, and our docility to our own law demonstrate the poverty of nature and fortune beside our native riches.

But now we are a mob. Man does not stand in awe of man, nor is his genius admonished to stay at home, to put itself in communication with the internal ocean, but it goes abroad to beg a cup of water of the urns of other men. We must go alone. I like the silent church before the service begins, better than any preaching. How far off, how cool, how chaste the persons look, begirt each one with a precinct or sanctuary! So let us always sit. Why should we assume the faults of our friend, or wife, or father, or child, because they sit around our hearth, or are said to have the same blood? All men have my blood and I all men's. Not for that will I adopt their petulance or folly, even to the extent of being ashamed of it. But your isolation must not be mechanical, but spiritual, that is, must be elevation. At times the whole world seems to be in conspiracy to importune you with emphatic trifles. Friend, climate, child, sickness, fear, want, charity, all knock at once at thy closet door and say,—“Come out unto us.” But keep thy state; come not into their confusion. The power men possess to annoy me I give them by a weak curiosity. No man can come near me but through my act. “What we love that we have, but by desire we bereave ourselves of the love.”

If we cannot at once rise to the sanctities of obedience and faith, let us at least resist our temptations; let us enter into the state of war and wake Thor and Woden, courage and constancy, in our Saxon breasts. This is to be done in our smooth times by speaking the truth. Check this lying hospitality and lying affection. Live no longer to the expectation of these deceived and deceiving people with whom we converse. Say to them, “O father, O mother, O wife, O brother, O friend, I have lived with you after appearances hitherto. Henceforward I am the truth's. Be it known unto you that henceforward I obey no law less than the eternal law. I will have no covenants but proximities. I shall endeavor to nourish my parents, to support my family, to be the chaste husband of one wife,—but these relations I must fill after a new and

unprecedented way. I appeal from your customs. I must be myself. I cannot break myself any longer for you, or you. If you can love me for what I am, we shall be the happier. If you cannot, I will still seek to deserve that you should. I will not hide my tastes or aversions. I will so trust that what is deep is holy, that I will do strongly before the sun and moon whatever inly rejoices me and the heart appoints. If you are noble, I will love you, if you are not, I will not hurt you and myself by hypocritical attentions. If you are true, but not in the same truth with me, cleave to your companions; I will seek my own. I do this not selfishly but humbly and truly. It is alike your interest, and mine, and all men's, however long we have dwelt in lies, to live in truth. Does this sound harsh to-day? You will soon love what is dictated by your nature as well as mine, and if we follow the truth it will bring us out safe at last"—But so may you give these friends pain. Yes, but I cannot sell my liberty and my power, to save their sensibility. Besides, all persons have their moments of reason, when they look out into the region of absolute truth; then will they justify me and do the same thing.

The populace think that your rejection of popular standards is a rejection of all standard, and mere antinomianism; and the bold sensualist will use the name of philosophy to gild his crimes. But the law of consciousness abides. There are two confessionals, in one or the other of which we must be shriven. You may fulfil your round of duties by clearing yourself in the *direct*, or in the *reflex* way. Consider whether you have satisfied your relations to father, mother, cousin, neighbor, town, cat and dog—whether any of these can upbraid you. But I may also neglect this reflex standard and absolve me to myself. I have my own stern claims and perfect circle. It denies the name of duty to many offices that are called duties. But if I can discharge its debts it enables me to dispense with the popular code. If any one imagines that this law is lax, let him keep its commandment one day.

And truly it demands something godlike in him who has cast off the common motives of humanity and has ventured to trust himself for a taskmaster. High be his heart, faithful his will, clear his sight, that he may in good earnest be doctrine, society, law, to himself, that a simple

purpose may be to him as strong as iron necessity is to others!

If any man consider the present aspects of what is called by distinction *society*, he will see the need of these ethics. The sinew and heart of man seem to be drawn out, and we are become timorous, desponding whimperers. We are afraid of truth, afraid of fortune, afraid of death, and afraid of each other. Our age yields no great and perfect persons. We want men and women who shall renovate life and our social state, but we see that most natures are insolvent, cannot satisfy their own wants, have an ambition out of all proportion to their practical force and do lean and beg day and night continually. Our housekeeping is mendicant, our acts, our occupations, our marriages, our religion we have not chosen, but society has chosen for us. We are parlor soldiers. We shun the rugged battle of fate, where strength is born.

If our young men miscarry in their first enterprises they lose all heart. If the young merchant fails, men say he is *ruined*. If the finest genius studies at one of our colleges and is not installed in an office within one year afterwards in the cities or suburbs of Boston or New York, it seems to his friends and to himself that he is right in being disheartened and in complaining the rest of his life. A sturdy lad from New Hampshire or Vermont, who in turn tries all the professions, who *teams it, farms it, peddles*, keeps a school, preaches, edits a newspaper, goes to Congress, buys a township, and so forth, in successive years, and always like a cat falls on his feet, is worth a hundred of these city dolls. He walks abreast with his days and feels no shame in not "studying a profession," for he does not postpone his life, but lives already. He has not one chance, but a hundred chances. Let a Stoic open the resources of man and tell men they are not leaning willows, but can and must detach themselves; that with the exercise of self-trust, new powers shall appear; that a man is the word made flesh, born to shed healing to the nations; that he should be ashamed of our compassion, and that the moment he acts from himself, tossing the laws, the books, idolatries and customs out of the window, we pity him no more but thank and revere him;—and that teacher shall restore the life of man to splendor and make his name dear to all history.

It is easy to see that a greater self-reliance

must work a revolution in all the offices and relations of men; in their religion, in their education; in their pursuits, their modes of living; their association, in their property; in their speculative views

1 In what prayers do men allow themselves! That which they call a holy office is not so much as brave and manly. Prayer looks abroad and asks for some foreign addition to come through some foreign virtue, and loses itself in endless mazes of natural and supernatural, and mediatorial and miraculous. Prayer that craves a particular commodity, anything less than all good, is vicious. Prayer is the contemplation of the facts of life from the highest point of view. It is the soliloquy of a beholding and jubilant soul. It is the spirit of God pronouncing his works good. But prayer as a means to effect a private end is meanness and theft. It supposes dualism and not unity in nature and consciousness. As soon as the man is at one with God, he will not beg. He will then see prayer in all action. The prayer of the farmer kneeling in his field to weed it, the prayer of the rower kneeling with the stroke of his oar, are true prayers heard throughout nature, though for cheap ends. Caratach, in Fletcher's "Bonduca," when admonished to inquire the mind of the God Audate, replies,—

*"His hidden meaning lies in our endeavors;
Our valors are our best gods."*

Another sort of false prayers are our regrets. Discontent is the want of self-reliance; it is infinity of will. Regret calamities if you can thereby help the sufferer; if not attend your own work and already the evil begins to be repaired. Our sympathy is just as base. We come to them who weep foolishly and sit down and cry for company, instead of imparting to them truth and health in rough electric shocks, putting them once more in communication with their own reason. The secret of fortune is joy in our hands. Welcome evermore to gods and men is the self-helping man. For him all doors are flung wide; him all tongues greet, all honors crown, all eyes follow with desire. Our love goes out to him and embraces him because he did not need it. We solicitously and apologetically caress and celebrate him because he held on his way and scorned our disapprobation. The gods love him because men hated him. "To the persevering mortal," said Zoroaster, "the blessed Immortals are swift."

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As men's prayers are a disease of the will, so are their creeds a disease of the intellect. They say with those foolish Israelites, "Let not God speak to us, lest we die. Speak thou, speak any man with us, and we will obey." Everywhere I am hindered of meeting God in my brother, because he has shut his own temple doors and recites fables merely of his brother's, or his brother's brother's God. Every new mind is a new classification. If it prove a mind of uncommon activity and power, a Locke, a Lavoisier, a Hutton, a Bentham, a Fourier, it imposes its classification on other men, and lo! a new system. In proportion to the depth of the thought, and so to the number of the objects it touches and brings within reach of the pupil, is his complacency. But chiefly is this apparent in creeds and churches, which are also classifications of some powerful mind acting on the elemental thought of duty and man's relation to the Highest. Such is Calvinism, Quakerism, Swedenborgism. The pupil takes the same delight in subordinating everything to the new terminology as a girl who has just learned botany in seeing a new earth and new seasons thereby. It will happen for a time that the pupil will find his intellectual power has grown by the study of his master's mind. But in all unbalanced minds the classification is idolized, passes for the end and not for a speedy exhaustible means, so that the walls of the system blend to their eye in the remote horizon with the walls of the universe; the luminaries of heaven seem to them hung on the arch their master built. They cannot imagine how you aliens have any right to see,—how you can see; "It must be somehow that you stole the light from us." They do not yet perceive that light, unsystematic, indomitable, will break into any cabin, even into theirs. Let them chirp awhile and call it their own. If they are honest and do well, presently their neat new pinfold will be too strait and low, will crack, will lean, will rot and vanish, and the immortal light, all young, and joyful, million-orbed, million-colored, will beam over the universe as on the first morning.

2. It is for want of self-culture that the superstition of Travelling, whose idols are Italy, England, Egypt, retains its fascination for all educated Americans. They who made England, Italy, or Greece venerable in the imagination, did so by sticking fast where they were, like an

axis of the earth. In manly hours we feel that duty is our place. The soul is no traveller, the wise man stays at home, and when his necessities, his duties, on any occasion call him from his house, or into foreign lands, he is at home still and shall make men sensible by the expression of his countenance that he goes, the missionary of wisdom and virtue, and visits cities and men like a sovereign and not like an interloper or a valet.

I have no churlish objection to the circumnavigation of the globe for the purposes of art, of study, and benevolence, so that the man is first domesticated, or does not go abroad with the hope of finding somewhat greater than he knows. He who travels to be amused, or to get somewhat which he does not carry, travels away from himself, and grows old even in youth among old things. In Thebes, in Palmyra, his will and mind have become old and dilapidated as they. He carries ruins to ruins.

Travelling is a fool's paradise. Our first journeys discover to us the indifference of places. At home I dream that at Naples, at Rome, I can be intoxicated with beauty and lose my sadness. I pack my trunk, embrace my friends, embark on the sea and at last wake up in Naples, and there beside me is the stern fact, the sad self, unrelenting, identical, that I fled from. I seek the Vatican and the palaces. I affect to be intoxicated with sights and suggestions, but I am not intoxicated. My giant goes with me wherever I go.

3. But the rage of travelling is a symptom of a deeper unsoundness affecting the whole intellectual action. The intellect is vagabond, and our system of education fosters restlessness. Our minds travel when our bodies are forced to stay at home. We imitate; and what is imitation but the travelling of the mind? Our houses are built with foreign taste; our shelves are garnished with foreign ornaments; our opinions, our tastes, our faculties lean, and follow the Past and the Distant. The soul created the arts wherever they have flourished. It was in his own mind that the artist sought his model. It was an application of his own thought to the thing to be done and the conditions to be observed. And why need we copy the Doric or the Gothic model? Beauty, convenience, grandeur of thought and quaint expression are as near to us as to any, and if the American artist will study with hope and love

the precise thing to be done by him, considering the climate, the soil, the length of the day, the wants of the people, the habit and form of the government, he will create a house in which all these will find themselves fitted, and taste and sentiment will be satisfied also.

Insist on yourself; never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life's cultivation; but of the adopted talent of another you have only an extemporaneous half possession. That which each can do best, none but his Maker can teach him. No man yet knows what it is, nor can, till that person has exhibited it. Where is the master who could have taught Shakspeare? Where is the master who could have instructed Franklin, or Washington, or Bacon, or Newton? Every great man is a unique. The Scipionism of Scipio is precisely that part he could not borrow. Shakspeare will never be made by the study of Shakspeare. Do that which is assigned you, and you cannot hope too much or dare too much. There is at this moment for you an utterance brave and grand as that of the colossal chisel of Phidias, or trowel of the Egyptians, or the pen of Moses or Dante, but different from all these. Not possibly will the soul, all rich, all eloquent, with thousand-cloven tongue, deign to repeat itself; but if you can hear what these patriarchs say, surely you can reply to them in the same pitch of voice; for the ear and the tongue are two organs of one nature. Abide in the simple and noble regions of thy life, obey thy heart, and thou shall reproduce the Fore-world again.

4. As our Religion, our Education, our Art look abroad, so does our spirit of society. All men plume themselves on the improvement of society, and no man improves.

Society never advances.⁵ It recedes as fast on one side as it gains on the other. It undergoes

⁵ The paragraphs which follow might have come from the essay on "Compensation." The doctrine of compensation, which is closely akin to fatalism, would lead more logically to the pessimism of Mark Twain than to the optimism of Emerson. In his *Mark Twain*, III, 1469, A. B. Paine quotes Clemens:

"From everlasting to everlasting, this is the law: the sum of wrong & misery shall always keep exact step with the sum of human blessedness."

"No 'civilization,' 'no advance,' has ever modified these proportions by even the shadow of a shade, nor ever can, while our race endures."

continual changes, it is barbarous, it is civilized, it is christianized, it is rich, it is scientific; but this change is not amelioration. For everything that is given something is taken. Society acquires new arts and loses old instincts. What a contrast between the well-clad, reading, writing, thinking American, with a watch, a pencil, and a bill of exchange in his pocket, and the naked New Zealander, whose property is a club, a spear, a mat, and an undivided twentieth of a shed to sleep under! But compare the health of the two men and you shall see that the white man has lost his aboriginal strength. If the traveller tell us truly, strike the savage with a broad-axe and in a day or two the flesh shall unite and heal as if you struck the blow into soft pitch, and the same blow shall send the white to his grave.

The civilized man has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet. He is supported on crutches, but lacks so much support of muscle. He has a fine Geneva watch, but he fails of the skill to tell the hour by the sun. A Greenwich nautical almanac he has, and so being sure of the information when he wants it, the man in the street does not know a star in the sky. The solstice he does not observe; the equinox he knows as little; and the whole bright calendar of the year is without a dial in his mind. His note-books impair his memory; his libraries overload his wit; the insurance-office increases the number of accidents; and it may be a question whether machinery does not encumber; whether we have not lost by refinement some energy, by a Christianity, entrenched in establishments and forms, some vigor of wild virtue. For every Stoic was a Stoic; but in Christendom where is the Christian?

There is no more deviation in the moral standard than in the standard of height or bulk. No greater men are now than ever were. A singular equality may be observed between the great men of the first and of the last ages; nor can all the science, art, religion, and philosophy of the nineteenth century avail to educate greater men than Plutarch's heroes, three or four and twenty centuries ago. Not in time is the race progressive. Phocion, Socrates, Anaxagoras, Diogenes, are great men, but they leave no class. He who is really of their class will not be called by their name, but will be his own man, and in his turn the founder of a sect. The arts and inventions of each period are only its costume and do not invigorate men. The harm of the

improved machinery may compensate its good Hudson and Behring accomplished so much in their fishing-boats as to astonish Parry and Franklin, whose equipment exhausted the resources of science and art. Galileo, with an opera-glass, discovered a more splendid series of celestial phenomena than any one since. Columbus found the New World in an undecked boat. It is curious to see the periodical disuse and perishing of means and machinery which were introduced with loud laudation a few years or centuries before. The great genius returns to essential man. We reckoned the improvements of the art of war among the triumphs of science, and yet Napoleon conquered Europe by the bivouac, which consisted of falling back on naked valor and disencumbering it of all aids. The Emperor held it impossible to make a perfect army, says Las Cases, "without abolishing our arms, magazines, commissaries, and carriages, until, in imitation of the Roman custom, the soldier should receive his supply of corn, grind it in his hand-mill and bake his bread himself."

Society is a wave. The wave moves onward, but the water of which it is composed does not. The same particle does not rise from the valley to the ridge. Its unity is only phenomenal. The persons who make up a nation to-day, next year die, and their experience dies with them.

And so the reliance on Property, including the reliance on governments which protect it, is the want of self-reliance. Men have looked away from themselves and at things so long that they have come to esteem the religious, learned, and civil institutions as guards of property, and they deprecate assaults on these, because they feel them to be assaults on property. They measure their esteem of each other by what each has, and not by what each is. But a cultivated man becomes ashamed of his property, out of new respect for his nature. Especially he hates what he has if he see that it is accidental,—came to him by inheritance, or gift, or crime; then he feels that it is not having; it does not belong to him, has no root in him and merely lies there because no revolution or no robber takes it away. But that which a man is, does always by necessity acquire; and what the man acquires, is living property, which does not wait the beck of rulers, or mobs, or revolutions, or fire, or storm, or bankruptcies, but perpetually renews itself wherever the man breathes. "Thy lot or

portion of life," said the Caliph Ali, "is seeking after thee, therefore be at rest from seeking after it." Our dependence on these foreign goods leads us to our slavish respect for numbers. The political parties meet in numerous conventions, the greater the concourse and with each new uproar of announcement, The delegation from Essex! The Democrats from New Hampshire! The Whigs of Maine! the young patriot feels himself stronger than before by a new thousand of eyes and arms. In like manner the reformers summon conventions and vote and resolve in multitude. Not so, O friends! will the God deign to enter and inhabit you, but by a method precisely the reverse. It is only as a man puts off all foreign support and stands alone that I see him to be strong and to prevail. He is weaker by every recruit to his banner. Is not a man better than a town? Ask nothing of men, and, in the endless mutation, thou only firm column must presently appear the upholder of all that surrounds thee. He who knows that power is inborn, that he is weak because he has looked for good out of him and elsewhere, and, so perceiving, throws himself unhesitatingly on his thought, instantly rights himself, stands in the erect position, commands his limbs, works miracles; just as a man who stands on his feet is stronger than a man who stands on his head.

So use all that is called Fortune. Most men gamble with her, and gain all, and lose all, as her wheel rolls. But do thou leave as unlawful these winnings, and deal with Cause and Effect, the chancellors of God. In the Will work and acquire, and thou hast chained the wheel of Chance, and shall sit hereafter out of fear from her rotations. A political victory, a rise of rents, the recovery of your sick or the return of your absent friend, or some other favorable event raises your spirits, and you think good days are preparing for you. Do not believe it. Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles.

from ENGLISH TRAITS (1856)

CHAPTER X. WEALTH

Emerson first visited England in 1833. He returned as a lecturer in October, 1847, and remained until the following July. In 1848 he lectured in America

on England, but he did not publish *English Traits* until 1856. The book is a more sympathetic study than Hawthorne's *Our Old Home* (1863), but Emerson was by no means blind to English shortcomings. The chapter on "Wealth" shows that the Concord sage was troubled by the evils involved in the industrial revolution, which in the mid-nineteenth century had proceeded much further in England than in the United States.

There is no country in which so absolute a homage is paid to wealth. In America there is a touch of shame when a man exhibits the evidences of large property, as if after all it needed apology. But the Englishman has pure pride in his wealth, and esteems it a final certificate. A coarse logic rules throughout all English souls,—if you have merit, can you not show it by your good clothes and coach and horses? How can a man be a gentleman without a pipe of wine? Haydon¹ says, "There is a fierce resolution to make every man live according to the means he possesses." There is a mixture of religion in it. They are under the Jewish law, and read with sonorous emphasis that their days shall be long in the land, they shall have sons and daughters, flocks and herds, wine and oil. In exact proportion is the reproach of poverty. They do not wish to be represented except by opulent men. An Englishman who has lost his fortune is said to have died of a broken heart. The last term of insult is, "a beggar." Nelson said, "The want of fortune is a crime which I can never get over." Sydney Smith said, "Poverty is infamous in England." And one of their recent writers speaks, in reference to a private and scholastic life, of "the grave moral deterioration which follows an empty exchequer." You shall find this sentiment, if not so frankly put, yet deeply implied in the novels and romances of the present century, and not only in these, but in biography and in the votes of public assemblies, in the tone of the preaching and in the table-talk.

I was lately turning over Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*, and looking naturally for another standard in a chronicle of the scholars of Oxford for two hundred years. But I found the two disgraces in that, as in most English books, are, first, disloyalty to Church and State, and second, to be born poor, or to come to poverty. A natural fruit of England is the brutal political economy.

¹ Benjamin Robert Haydon (1786-1846), an English painter whose best-known work is an autobiography.

Malthus finds no cover laid at Nature's table for the laborer's son. In 1809, the majority in Parliament expressed itself by the language of Mr. Fuller in the House of Commons, "If you do not like the country, damn you, you can leave it." When Sir S. Romilly proposed his bill forbidding parish officers to bind children apprentices at a greater distance than forty miles from their home, Peel opposed, and Mr. Wortley said, "though, in the higher ranks, to cultivate family affections was a good thing, it was not so among the lower orders. Better take them away from those who might deprave them. And it was highly injurious to trade to stop binding to manufacturers, as it must raise the price of labor and of manufactured goods."

The respect for truth of facts in England is equalled only by the respect for wealth. It is at once the pride of art of the Saxon, as he is a wealth-maker, and his passion for independence. The Englishman believes that every man must take care of himself, and has himself to thank if he do not mend his condition. To pay their debts is their national point of honor. From the Exchequer and the East India House to the huckster's shop, every thing prospers because it is solvent. The British armies are solvent and pay for what they take. The British empire is solvent; for in spite of the huge national debt, the valuation mounts. During the war from 1789 to 1815, whilst they complained that they were taxed within an inch of their lives, and by dint of enormous taxes were subsidizing all the continent against France, the English were growing rich every year faster than any people ever grew before. It is their maxim that the weight of taxes must be calculated, not by what is taken, but by what is left. Solvency is in the ideas and mechanism of an Englishman. The Crystal Palace is not considered honest until it pays; no matter how much convenience, beauty, or *éclat*, it must be self-supporting. They are contented with slower steamers, as long as they know that swifter boats lose money. They proceed logically by the double method of labor and thrift. Every household exhibits an exact economy, and nothing of that uncalculated headlong expenditure which families use in America. If they cannot pay, they do not buy; for they have no presumption of better fortunes next year, as our people have; and they say without shame, I cannot afford it. Gentlemen do not hesitate to

ride in the second-class cars, or in the second cabin. An economist, or a man who can proportion his means and his ambition, or bring the year round with expenditure which expresses his character without embarrassing one day of his future, is already a master of life, and a freeman. Lord Burleigh writes to his son that "one ought never to devote more than two thirds of his income to the ordinary expenses of life, since the extraordinary will be certain to absorb the other third."

The ambition to create value evokes every kind of ability; government becomes a manufacturing corporation, and every house a mill. The headlong bias to utility will let no talent lie in a napkin,—if possible will teach spiders to weave silk stockings. An Englishman, while he eats and drinks no more or not much more than another man, labors three times as many hours in the course of a year as another European; or, his life as a workman is three lives. He works fast. Everything in England is at a quick pace. They have reinforced their own productivity by the creation of that marvellous machinery which differences this age from any other age.

It is a curious chapter in modern history, the growth of the machine-shop. Six hundred years ago, Roger Bacon explained the precession of the equinoxes, the consequent necessity of the reform of the calendar; measured the length of the year; invented gunpowder; and announced (as if looking from his lofty cell, over five centuries, into ours) that "machines can be constructed to drive ships more rapidly than a whole galley of rowers could do; nor would they need anything but a pilot to steer them. Carriages also might be constructed to move with an incredible speed, without the aid of any animal. Finally, it would not be impossible to make machines which by means of a suit of wings should fly in the air in the manner of birds." But the secret slept with Bacon. The six hundred years have not yet fulfilled his words. Two centuries ago the sawing of timber was done by hand; the carriage wheels ran on wooden axles; the land was tilled by wooden ploughs. And it was to little purpose that they had pit-coal, or that looms were improved, unless Watt and Stephenson had taught them to work force-pumps and power-looms by steam. The great strides were all taken within the last hundred years. The Life of Sir Robert Peel, in his day the model Englishman, very properly has,

for a frontispiece, a drawing of the spinning-jenny, which wove the web of his fortunes. Hargreaves invented the spinning-jenny, and died in a work-house. Arkwright improved the invention, and the machine dispensed with the work of ninety-nine men; that is, one spinner could do as much work as one hundred had done before. The loom was improved further. But the men would sometimes strike for wages and combine against the masters, and, about 1829-30, much fear was felt lest the trade would be drawn away by these interruptions and the emigration of the spinners to Belgium and the United States. Iron and steel are very obedient. Whether it were not possible to make a spinner that would not rebel, nor mutter, nor scowl, nor strike for wages, nor emigrate? At the solicitation of the masters, after a mob and riot at Staley Bridge, Mr. Roberts of Manchester undertook to create this peaceful fellow, instead of the quarrelsome fellow God had made. After a few trials, he succeeded, and in 1830 procured a patent for his self-acting mule; a creation, the delight of mill-owners, and "destined," they said, "to restore order among the industrious classes"; a machine requiring only a child's hand to piece the broken yarns. As Arkwright had destroyed domestic spinning, so Roberts destroyed the factory spinner. The power of machinery in Great Britain, in mills, has been computed to be equal to 600,000,000 men, one man being able by the aid of steam to do the work which required two hundred and fifty men to accomplish fifty years ago. The production has been commensurate. England already had this laborious race, rich soil, water, wood, coal, iron and favorable climate. Eight hundred years ago commerce had made it rich, and it was recorded, "England is the richest of all the northern nations." The Norman historians recite that "in 1067, William carried with him into Normandy, from England, more gold and silver than had ever before been seen in Gaul." But when, to this labor and trade and these native resources was added this goblin of steam, with his myriad arms, never tired, working night and day everlastingly, the amassing of property has run out of all figures. It makes the motor of the last ninety years. The steam-pipe has added to her population and wealth the equivalent of four or five Englands. Forty thousand ships are entered in Lloyd's lists. The yield of wheat has gone on from 2,000,000 quar-

ters in the time of the Stuarts, to 13,000,000 in 1854. A thousand million of pounds sterling are said to compose the floating money of commerce. In 1848, Lord John Russell stated that the people of this country had laid out £300,000,000 of capital in railways, in the last four years. But a better measure than these sounding figures is the estimate that there is wealth enough in England to support the entire population in idleness for one year.

The wise, versatile, all-giving machinery makes chisels, roads, locomotives, telegraphs. Whitworth divides a bar to a millionth of an inch. Steam twines huge cannon into wreaths, as easily as it braids straw, and vies with the volcanic forces which twisted the strata. It can clothe the shingle mountains with ship-oaks, make sword-blades that will cut gun-barrels in two. In Egypt, it can plant forests, and bring rain after three thousand years. Already it is ruddering the balloon, and the next war will be fought in the air. But another machine more potent in England than steam is the Bank. It votes an issue of bills, population is stimulated and cities rise; it refuses loans, and emigration empties the country; trade sinks; revolutions break out; kings are dethroned. By these new agents our social system is moulded. By dint of steam and of money, war and commerce are changed. Nations have lost their old omnipotence, the patriotic tie does not hold. Nations are getting obsolete, we go and live where we will. Steam has enabled men to choose what law they will live under. Money makes place for them. The telegraph is a limp band that will hold the Fenris-wolf of war. For now that a telegraph line runs through France and Europe from London, every message it transmits makes stronger by one thread the band which war will have to cut.

The introduction of these elements gives new resources to existing proprietors. A sporting duke may fancy that the state depends on the House of Lords, but the engineer sees that every stroke of the steam-piston gives value to the duke's land, fills it with tenants; doubles, quadruples, centuples the duke's capital, and creates new measures and new necessities for the culture of his children. Of course it draws the nobility into the competition, as stockholders in the mine, the canal, the railway, in the application of steam to agriculture, and sometimes into trade. But it also introduces large classes into the same com-

petition; the old energy of the Norse race arms itself with these magnificent powers; new men prove an overmatch for the land-owner, and the mill buys out the castle. Scandinavian Thor, who once forged his bolts in icy Hecla and built galleys by lonely fiords, in England has advanced with the times, has shorn his beard, enters Parliament, sits down at a desk in the India House and lends Miollnir to Birmingham for a steam-hammer.

The creation of wealth in England in the last ninety years is a main fact in modern history. The wealth of London determines prices all over the globe. All things precious, or useful, or amusing, or intoxicating, are sucked into this commerce and floated to London. Some English private fortunes reach, and some exceed a million of dollars a year. A hundred thousand palaces adorn the island. All that can feed the senses and passions, all that can succor the talent or arm the hands of the intelligent middle class, who never spare in what they buy for their own consumption; all that can aid science, gratify taste, or soothe comfort, is in open market. Whatever is excellent and beautiful in civil, rural, or ecclesiastic architecture, in fountain, garden, or grounds,—the English noble crosses sea and land to see and to copy at home. The taste and science of thirty peaceful generations; the gardens which Evelyn planted; the temples and pleasure-houses which Inigo Jones and Christopher Wren built; the wood that Gibbons carved; the taste of foreign and domestic artists, Shenstone, Pope, Brown, Loudon, Paxton,—are in the vast auction, and the hereditary principle heaps on the owner of to-day the benefit of ages of owners. The present possessors are to the full as absolute as any of their fathers in choosing and procuring what they like. This comfort and splendor, the breadth of lake and mountain, tillage, pasture and park, sumptuous castle and modern villa,—all consist with perfect order. They have no revolutions; no horse-guards dictating to the crown; no Parisian *poissardes* and barricades; no mob; but drowsy habitude, daily dress-dinners, wine and ale and beer and gin and sleep.

With this power of creation and this passion for independence, property has reached an ideal perfection. It is felt and treated as the national life-blood. The laws are framed to give property the securest possible basis, and the provisions

to lock and transmit it have exercised the cunningest heads in a profession which never admits a fool. The rights of property nothing but felony and treason can override. The house is a castle which the king cannot enter. The Bank is a strong box to which the king has no key. Whatever surly sweetness possession can give, is tasted in England to the dregs. Vested rights are awful things, and absolute possession gives the smallest freeholder identity of interest with the duke. High stone fences and padlocked garden-gates announce the absolute will of the owner to be alone. Every whim of exaggerated egotism is put into stone and iron, into silver and gold, with costly deliberation and detail.

An Englishman hears that the Queen Dowager wishes to establish some claim to put her park paling a rod forward into his grounds, so as to get a coachway and save her a mile to the avenue. Instantly he transforms his paling into stone-masonry, solid as the walls of Cuma, and all Europe cannot prevail on him to sell or compound for an inch of the land. They delight in a freak as the proof of their sovereign freedom. Sir Edward Boynton, at Spic Park at Cadenham, on a precipice of incomparable prospect, built a house like a long barn, which had not a window on the prospect side. Strawberry Hill of Horace Walpole, Fonthill Abbey of Mr. Beckford, were freaks; and Newstead Abbey became one in the hands of Lord Byron.

But the proudest result of this creation has been the great and refined forces it has put at the disposal of the private citizen. In the social world an Englishman to-day has the best lot. He is a king in a plain coat. He goes with the most powerful protection, keeps the best company, is armed by the best education, is seconded by wealth; and his English name and accidents are like a flourish of trumpets announcing him. This, with his quiet style of manners, gives him the power of a sovereign without the inconveniences which belong to that rank. I much prefer the condition of an English gentleman of the better class to that of any potentate in Europe,—whether for travel, or for opportunity of society, or for access to means of science or study, or for mere comfort and easy healthy relation to people at home.

Such as we have seen is the wealth of England; a mighty mass, and made good in whatever details we care to explore. The cause and spring

of it is the wealth of temperament in the people. The wonder of Britain is this plenteous nature. Her worthies are ever surrounded by as good men as themselves; each is a captain a hundred strong, and that wealth of men is represented again in the faculty of each individual,—that he has waste strength, power to spare. The English are so rich and seem to have established a tap-root in the bowels of the planet, because they are constitutionally fertile and creative.

But a man must keep an eye on his servants, if he would not have them rule him. Man is a shrewd inventor and is ever taking the hint of a new machine from his own structure, adapting some secret of his own anatomy in iron, wood and leather to some required function in the work of the world. But it is found that the machine unmans the user. What he gains in making cloth, he loses in general power. There should be temperance in making cloth, as well as in eating. A man should not be a silk-worm, nor a nation a tent of caterpillars. The robust rural Saxon degenerates in the mills to the Leicester stockinger, to the imbecile Manchester spinner,—far on the way to be spiders and needles. The incessant repetition of the same hand-work dwarfs the man, robs him of his strength, wit and versatility, to make a pin-polisher, a buckle-maker, or any other specialty; and presently, in a change of industry, whole towns are sacrificed like ant-hills, when the fashion of shoe-strings supersedes buckles, when cotton takes the place of linen, or railways of turnpikes, or when commons are enclosed by landlords. Then society is admonished of the mischief of the division of labor, and that the best political economy is care and culture of men; for in these crises all are ruined except such as are proper individuals, capable of thought and of new choice and the application of their talent to new labor. Then again come in new calamities. England is aghast at the disclosure of her fraud in the adulteration of food, of drugs and of almost every fabric in her mills and shops; finding that milk will not nourish, nor sugar sweeten, nor bread satisfy, nor pepper bite the tongue, nor glue stick. In true England all is false and forged. This too is the reaction of machinery, but of the larger machinery of commerce. 'Tis not, I suppose, want of probity, so much as the tyranny of trade, which necessitates a perpetual competition of underselling,

and that again a perpetual deterioration of the fabric.

The machinery has proved, like the balloon, unmanageable, and flies away with the acronaut. Steam from the first hissed and screamed to warn him; it was dreadful with its explosion, and crushed the engineer. The machinist has wrought and watched, engineers and firemen without number have been sacrificed in learning to tame and guide the monster. But harder still it has proved to resist and rule the dragon Money, with his paper wings. Chancellors and Boards of Trade, Pitt, Peel and Robinson and their Parliaments and their whole generation adopted false principles, and went to their graves in the belief that they were enriching the country which they were impoverishing. They congratulated each other on ruinous expedients. It is rare to find a merchant who knows why a crisis occurs in trade, why prices rise or fall, or who knows the mischief of paper-money. In the culmination of national prosperity, in the annexation of countries; building of ships, depots, towns; in the influx of tons of gold and silver; amid the chuckle of chancellors and financiers, it was found that bread rose to famine prices, that the yeoman was forced to sell his cow and pig, his tools and his acre of land; and the dreadful barometer of the poor-rates was touching the point of ruin. The poor-rate was sucking in the solvent classes and forcing an exodus of farmers and mechanics. What befalls from the violence of financial crises, befalls daily in the violence of artificial legislation.

Such a wealth has England earned, ever new, bounteous and augmenting. But the question recurs, does she take the step beyond, namely to the wise use, in view of the supreme wealth of nations? We estimate the wisdom of nations by seeing what they did with their surplus capital. And, in view of these injuries, some compensation has been attempted in England. A part of the money earned returns to the brain to buy schools, libraries, bishops, astronomers, chemists and artists with; and a part to repair the wrongs of this intemperate weaving, by hospitals, savings-banks, Mechanics' Institutes, public grounds and other charities and amenities. But the antidotes are frightfully inadequate, and the evil requires a deeper cure, which time and a simpler social organization must supply. At present she

does not rule her wealth. She is simply a good England, but no divinity, or wise and instructed soul. She too is in the stream of fate, one victim more in a common catastrophe.

But being in the fault, she has the misfortune of greatness to be held as the chief offender. England must be held responsible for the despotism of expense. Her prosperity, the splendor which so much manhood and talent and perseverance has thrown upon vulgar aims, is the very argument of materialism. Her success strengthens the hands of base wealth. Who can propose to youth poverty and wisdom, when mean gain has arrived at the conquest of letters and arts; when English success has grown out of the very renunciation of principles, and the dedication to outsides? A civility of trifles, of money and expense, an erudition of sensation takes place, and the putting as many impediments as we can between the man and his objects. Hardly the bravest among them have the manliness to resist it successfully. Hence it has come that not the aims of a manly life, but the means of meeting a certain ponderous expense, is that which is to be considered by a youth in England emerging from his minority. A large family is reckoned a misfortune. And it is a consolation in the death of the young, that a source of expense is closed.

ILLUSIONS

(1860)

This essay, from Emerson's *The Conduct of Life* (1860), is one of the best of his later essays, embodying what Bliss Perry calls "the final wisdom" of the Concord sage. In a notebook entitled *Orientalist* Emerson wrote:

"In the history of intellect no more important fact than the Hindoo theology, teaching that the beatitudes or Supreme Good is to be obtained through science; namely, by perception of the real and unreal, setting aside matter, and qualities and affections, or emotions and persons and actions as *Maia*s or illusions, and thus arriving at the contemplation of the one Eternal Life and Cause and a perpetual approach and assimilation to Him; . . .

"The highest object of their religion was to restore that bond by which their own self (atman) was linked to the Eternal Self (paramatman;) to recover that unity which had been clouded and obscured by the

magical illusions of reality, by the so-called *Maia* of Creation."

For Neo-Platonic and Oriental influences on Emerson, see J. S. Harrison, *The Teachers of Emerson* (1910), F. I. Carpenter, *Emerson and Asia* (1930), and Arthur Christy, *The Orient in American Transcendentalism: A Study of Emerson, Thoreau, and Alcott* (1932).

Flow, flow the waves hated,
Accursed, adored,
The waves of mutation:
No anchorage is
Sleep is not, death is not;
Who seem to die live.
House you were born in,
Friends of your spring-time,
Old man and young maid,
Day's toil and its guerdon,
They are all vanishing,
Fleeing to fables,
Cannot be moored.
See the stars through them,
Through teacherous marbles.
Know, the stars yonder,
The stars everlasting,
Are fugitive also,
And emulate, vaulted,
The lambent heat-lightning,
And fire-fly's flight.

When thou dost return
On the wave's circulation,
Beholding the shimmer,
The wild dissipation,
And, out of endeavor
To change and to flow,
The gas become solid,
And phantoms and nothings
Return to be things,
And endless imbroglio
Is law and the world,—
Then first shalt thou know,
That in the wild turmoil,
Horsed on the Proteus,¹
Thou ridest to power,
And to endurance.

Some years ago, in company with an agreeable party, I spent a long summer day in exploring the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. We traversed, through spacious galleries affording a solid masonry foundation for the town and country overhead, the six or eight black miles from the

¹ A god of the sea who had the power of changing himself into any form.

mouth of the cavern to the innermost recess which tourists visit,—a niche or grotto made of one seamless stalactite, and called, I believe, Serena's Bower. I lost the light of one day. I saw high domes and bottomless pits; heard the voice of unseen waterfalls; paddled three quarters of a mile in the deep Echo River, whose waters are peopled with the blind fish; crossed the streams "Lethe" and "Styx"; plied with music and guns the echoes in these alarming galleries; saw every form of stalagmite and stalactite in the sculptured and fretted chambers;—icicle, orange-flower, acanthus, grapes and snowball. We shot Bengal lights into the vaults and groins of the sparry cathedrals and examined all the masterpieces which the four combined engineers, water, limestone, gravitation and time, could make in the dark.

The mysteries and scenery of the cave had the same dignity that belongs to all natural objects, and which shames the fine things to which we foppishly compare them. I remarked especially the mimetic habit with which nature, on new instruments, hums her old tunes, making night to mimic day, and chemistry to ape vegetation. But I then took notice and still chiefly remember that the best thing which the cave had to offer was an illusion. On arriving at what is called the "Star-Chamber," our lamps were taken from us by the guide and extinguished or put aside, and, on looking upwards, I saw or seemed to see the night heaven thick with stars glimmering more or less brightly over our heads, and even what seemed a comet flaming among them. All the party were touched with astonishment and pleasure. Our musical friends sung with much feeling a pretty song, "The stars are in the quiet sky," etc., and I sat down on the rocky floor to enjoy the serene picture. Some crystal specks in the black ceiling high overhead, reflecting the light of a half-hid lamp, yielded this magnificent effect.

I own I did not like the cave so well for eking out its sublimities with this theatrical trick. But I have had many experiences like it, before and since; and we must be content to be pleased without too curiously analyzing the occasions. Our conversation with nature is not just what it seems. The cloud-rack, the sunrise and sunset glories, rainbows and Northern Lights are not quite so spherulic as our childhood thought them, and the part our organization plays in them is

too large. The senses interfere everywhere and mix their own structure with all they report of. Once we fancied the earth a plane, and stationary. In admiring the sunset we do not yet deduct the rounding, coördinating, pictorial powers of the eye.

The same interference from our organization creates the most of our pleasure and pain. Our first mistake is the belief that the circumstance gives the joy which we give to the circumstance. Life is an ecstasy. Life is sweet as nitrous oxide; and the fisherman dripping all day over a cold pond, the switchman at the railway intersection, the farmer in the field, the negro in the rice-swamp, the fop in the street, the hunter in the woods, the barrister with the jury, the belle at the ball, all ascribe a certain pleasure to their employment, which they themselves give it. Health and appetite impart the sweetness to sugar, bread and meat. We fancy that our civilization has got us so far, but we still come back to our primers.

We live by our imaginations, by our admirations, by our sentiments. The child walks amid heaps of illusions, which he does not like to have disturbed. The boy, how sweet to him is his fancy! how dear the story of barons and battles! What a hero he is, whilst he feeds on his heroes! What a debt is his to imaginative books! He has no better friend or influence than Scott, Shakespeare, Plutarch and Homer. The man lives to other objects, but who dare affirm that they are more real? Even the prose of the streets is full of refractions. In the life of the dreariest alderman, fancy enters into all details and colors them with rosy hue. He imitates the air and actions of people whom he admires, and is raised in his own eyes. He pays a debt quicker to a rich man than to a poor man. He wishes the bow and compliment of some leader in the state or in society; weighs what he says; perhaps he never comes nearer to him for that, but dies at last better contented for this amusement of his eyes and his fancy.

The world rolls, the din of life is never hushed. In London, in Paris, in Boston, in San Francisco, the carnival, the masquerade is at its height. Nobody drops his domino. The unities, the fictions of the piece it would be an impertinence to break. The chapter of fascinations is very long. Great is paint; nay, God is the painter; and we rightly accuse the critic who destroys too many

illusions Society does not love its unmaskers. It was wittily if somewhat bitterly said by D'Alembert, "*qu'un état de vapeur était un état très fâcheux, parcequ'il nous faisait voir les choses comme elles sont*"² I find men victims of illusion in all parts of life. Children, youths, adults and old men, all are led by one bauble or another. Yoganidra, the goddess of illusion, Proteus, or Momus,³ or Gylfi's Mocking,⁴—for the Power has many names,—is stronger than the Titans, stronger than Apollo. Few have overheard the gods or surprised their secret. Life is a succession of lessons which must be lived to be understood. All is riddle. There are as many pillows of illusion as flakes in a snow-storm. We wake from one dream into another dream. The toys to be sure are various, and are graduated in refinement to the quality of the dupe. The intellectual man requires a fine bait; the sots are easily amused. But everybody is drugged with his own frenzy, and the pageant marches at all hours, with music and banner and badge.

Amid the joyous troop who give in to the charivari, comes now and then a sad-eyed boy whose eyes lack the requisite refractions to clothe the show in due glory, and who is afflicted with a tendency to trace home the glittering miscellany of fruits and flowers to one root. Science is a search after identity, and the scientific whim is lurking in all corners. At the State Fair a friend of mine complained that all the varieties of fancy pears in our orchards seemed to have been selected by somebody who had a whim for a particular kind of pear, and only cultivated such as had that perfume; they were all alike. And I remember the quarrel of another youth with the confectioners, that when he racked his wit to choose the best comfits in the shops, in all the endless varieties of sweetmeat he could find only three flavors, or two. What then? Pears and cakes are good for something; and because you

unluckily have an eye or nose too keen, why need you spoil the comfort which the rest of us find in them? I knew a humorist who in a good deal of a rattle had a grain or two of sense. He shocked the company by maintaining that the attributes of God were two,—power and risibility, and that it was the duty of every pious man to keep up the comedy. And I have known gentlemen of great stake in the community, but whose sympathies were cold,—presidents of colleges and governors and senators,—who held themselves bound to sign every temperance pledge, and act with Bible societies and missions and peace-makers, and cry *Hist-a-boy!* to every good dog. We must not carry comity too far, but we all have kind impulses in this direction. When the boys come into my yard for leave to gather horse-chestnuts, I own I enter into nature's game, and affect to grant the permission reluctantly, fearing that any moment they will find out the imposture of that showy chaff. But this tenderness is quite unnecessary; the enchantments are laid on very thick. Their young life is thatched with them. Bare and grim to tears is the lot of the children in the hovel I saw yesterday; yet not the less they hung it round with frippery romance, like the children of the happiest fortune, and talked of "the dear cottage where so many joyful hours had flown." Well, this thatching of hovels is the custom of the country. Women, more than all, are the element and kingdom of illusion. Being fascinated, they fascinate. They see through Claude-Lorraines.⁵ And how dare any one, if he could, pluck away the *coulisses*, stage effects and ceremonies, by which they live? Too pathetic, too pitiable, is the region of affection, and its atmosphere always liable to *mirage*.

We are not very much to blame for our bad marriages. We live amid hallucinations; and this especial trap is laid to trip up our feet with, and all are tripped up first or last. But the mighty Mother who had been so sly with us, as if she felt that she owed us some indemnity, insinuates into the Pandora-box of marriage some deep and serious benefits and some great joys. We find a delight in the beauty and happiness of children that makes the heart too big for the body. In the worst-assorted connections there is ever some

² Jean le Rond D'Alembert (1717-1783), one of the French *philosophes*. The French means: "that a state of vapor was a very grievous state because it made us see things as they are." The passage suggests the French *philosophe's* view of "the ceaseless interchange of substance and perpetual circulation of life."

³ God of mockery.

⁴ Gylfi, in the Icelandic prose Edda of Snorri Sturluson (1178-1241), visits Asgard and is received by the gods with illusions.

⁵ Claude Lorraine, or Claude le Lorrain (1600-1682), a French landscape painter.

mixture of true marriage. Teague and his jade get some just relations of mutual respect, kindly observation, and fostering of each other; learn something, and would carry themselves wiselier if they were now to begin.

'T is fine for us to point at one another fine madman, as if there were any exempts. The scholar in his library is none. I, who have all my life heard any number of orations and debates, read poems and miscellaneous books, conversed with many geniuses, am still the victim of any new page; and if Marmaduke, or Hugh, or Moosehead, or any other, invent a new style or mythology, I fancy the world will be all brave and right if dressed in these colors, which I had not thought of. Then at once I will daub with this new paint; but it will not stick. 'T is like the cement which the peddler sells at the door; he makes broken crockery hold with it, but you can never buy of him a bit of the cement which will make it hold when he is gone.

Men who make themselves felt in the world avail themselves of a certain fate in their constitution which they know how to use. But they never deeply interest us unless they lift a corner of the curtain, or betray, never so slightly, their penetration of what is behind it. 'T is the charm of practical men that outside of their practicality are a certain poetry and play, as if they led the good horse Power by the bridle, and preferred to walk, though they can ride so fiercely. Bonaparte is intellectual, as well as Cæsar; and the best soldiers, sea-captains and railway men have a gentleness when off duty, a good-natured admission that there are illusions, and who shall say that he is not their sport? We stigmatize the cast-iron fellows who cannot so detach themselves, as "dragon-ridden," "thunder-stricken," and fools of fate, with whatever powers endowed.

Since our tuition is through emblems and indirections, it is well to know that there is method in it, a fixed scale and rank above rank in the phantasms. We begin low with coarse masks and rise to the most subtle and beautiful. The red men told Columbus "they had an herb which took away fatigue"; but he found the illusion of "arriving from the east at the Indies" more composing to his lofty spirit than any tobacco. Is not our faith in the impenetrability of matter more sedative than narcotics? You play with jackstraws, balls, bowls, horse and gun,

estates and politics; but there are finer games before you. Is not time a pretty toy? Life will show you masks that are worth all your carnivals. Yonder mountain must migrate into your mind.

5 The fine star-dust and nebulous blur in Orion, "the portentous year of Mizar and Alcor," must come down and be dealt with in your household thought. What if you shall happen to discern that the play and playground of all this pompous history are radiations from yourself, and that the sun borrows his beams? What terrible questions we are learning to ask! The former men believed in magic, by which temples, cities and men were swallowed up, and all trace of them gone. We are coming on the secret of a magic which sweeps out of men's minds all vestige of theism and beliefs which they and their fathers held and were framed upon

There are deceptions of the senses, deceptions of the passions, and the structural, beneficent illusions of sentiment and of the intellect. There is the illusion of love, which attributes to the beloved person all which that person shares with his or her family, sex, age or condition, nay, with the human mind itself. 'T is these which the lover loves, and Anna Matilda gets the credit of them.⁶ As if one shut up always in a tower, with one window through which the face of heaven and earth could be seen, should fancy that all the marvels he beheld belonged to that window. There is the illusion of time, which is very deep; who has disposed of it?—or come to the conviction that what seems the *succession* of thought is only the distribution of the wholes into casual series? The intellect sees that every atom carries the whole of nature; that the mind opens to omnipotence; that, in the endless striving and ascents, the metamorphosis is entire, so that the soul doth not know itself in its own act when that act is perfected. There is illusion that shall deceive even the elect. There is illusion that shall deceive even the performer of the miracle. Though he make his body, he denies that he makes it. Though the world exist from thought, thought is daunted in presence of the world. One after the other we accept the mental laws, still resisting those which follow, which however must be accepted. But all our concessions only compel us to new profusion. And what avails it that science has come to treat space and

⁶ Compare Emerson's poem, "The Enchanter."

time as simply forms of thought, and the material world as hypothetical, and withal our pretension of *property* and even of self-hood are fading with the rest, if, at last, even our thoughts are not finalities, but the incessant flowing and ascension reach these also, and each thought which yesterday was a finality, to-day is yielding to a larger generalization?

With such volatile elements to work in, 't is no wonder if our estimates are loose and floating. We must work and affirm, but we have no guess of the value of what we say or do. The cloud is now as big as your hand, and now it covers a county. That story of Thor,⁷ who was set to drain the drinking-horn in Asgard and to wrestle with the old woman and to run with the runner Lok, and presently found that he had been drinking up the sea, and wrestling with Time, and racing with Thought,—describes us, who are contending, amid these seeming trifles, with the supreme energies of nature. We fancy we have fallen into bad company and squalid condition, low debts, shoe-bills, broken glass to pay for, pots to buy, butcher's meat, sugar, milk and coal. "Set me some great task, ye gods! and I will show my spirit." "Not so," says the good Heaven; "plod and plough, vamp your old coats and hats, weave a shoestring; great affairs and the best wine by and by." Well, 't is all phantasm; and if we weave a yard of tape in all humility and as well as we can, long hereafter we shall see it was no cotton tape at all but some galaxy which we braided, and that the threads were Time and Nature.

We cannot write the order of the variable winds. How can we penetrate the law of our shifting moods and susceptibility? Yet they differ as all and nothing. Instead of the firmament of yesterday, which our eyes require, it is to-day an egg-shell which coops us in; we cannot even see what or where our stars of destiny are. From day to day the capital facts of human life are hidden from our eyes. Suddenly the mist rolls up and reveals them, and we think how much good time is gone that might have been saved had any hint of these things been shown. A sudden rise in the road shows us the system of mountains, and all the summits, which have been just as near us all the year, but quite out

⁷ The story is told by Snorri Sturleson and, very briefly, by Carlyle in the lecture on Odin in *Heroes and Hero-Worship*.

of mind. But these alternations are not without their order, and we are parties to our various fortune. If life seems a succession of dreams, yet poetic justice is done in dreams also. The visions of good men are good; it is the undisciplined will that is whipped with bad thoughts and bad fortunes. When we break the laws, we lose our hold on the central reality. Like sick men in hospitals, we change only from bed to bed, from one folly to another; and it cannot signify much what becomes of such castaways, wailing, stupid, comatose creatures, lifted from bed to bed, from the nothing of life to the nothing of death.

In this kingdom of illusions we grope eagerly for stays and foundations. There is none but a strict and faithful dealing at home and a severe barring out of all duplicity or illusion there. Whatever games are played with us, we must play no games with ourselves, but deal in our privacy with the last honesty and truth. I look upon the simple and childish virtues of veracity and honesty as the root of all that is sublime in character. Speak as you think, be what you are, pay your debts of all kinds. I prefer to be owned as sound and solvent, and my word as good as my bond, and to be what cannot be skipped, or dissipated, or undermined, to all the *éclat* in the universe. This reality is the foundation of friendship, religion, poetry and art. At the top or at the bottom of all illusions, I set the cheat which still leads us to work and live for appearances; in spite of our conviction, in all sane hours, that it is what we really are that avails with friends, with strangers, and with fate or fortune.

One would think from the talk of men that riches and poverty were a great matter; and our civilization mainly respects it. But the Indians say that they do not think the white man, with his brow of care, always toiling, afraid of heat and cold, and keeping within doors, has any advantage of them. The permanent interest of every man is never to be in a false position, but to have the weight of nature to back him in all that he does. Riches and poverty are a thick or thin costume; and our life—the life of all of us—identical. For we transcend the circumstance continually and taste the real quality of existence; as in our employments, which only differ in the manifestations but express the same laws; or in our thoughts, which wear no silks and taste no ice-creams. We see God face to face every hour, and know the savor of nature.

The early Greek philosophers Heraclitus and Xenophanes measured their force on this problem of identity. Diogenes of Apollonia said that unless the atoms were made of one stuff, they could never blend and act with one another. But the Hindoos, in their sacred writings, express the liveliest feeling, both of the essential identity and of that illusion which they conceive variety to be. "The notions, *'I am,'* and *'This is mine,'* which influence mankind, are but delusions of the mother of the world.⁸ Dispel, O Lord of all the creatures! the conceit of knowledge which proceeds from ignorance." And the beatitude of man they hold to lie in being free from fascination.

The intellect is stimulated by the statement of truth in a trope, and the will by clothing the laws of life in illusions. But the unities of Truth and Right are not broken by the disguise. There need never be any confusion in these. In a crowded life of many parts and performers, on a stage of nations, or in the obscurest hamlet in Maine or California, the same elements offer the same choices to each new comer, and, according to his election, he fixes his fortune in absolute Nature. It would be hard to put more mental and moral philosophy than the Persians have thrown into a sentence,—

*Fooled thou must be, though wisest of the wise:
Then be the fool of virtue, not of vice.*

There is no chance and no anarchy in the universe. All is system and gradation. Every god is there sitting in his sphere. The young mortal enters the hall of the firmament; there is he alone with them alone, they pouring on him benedictions and gifts, and beckoning him up to their thrones. On the instant, and incessantly, fall snow-storms of illusions. He fancies himself in a vast crowd which sways this way and that and whose movement and doings he must obey: he fancies himself poor, orphaned, insignificant. The mad crowd drives hither and thither, now curiously commanding this thing to be done, now that. What is he that he should resist their will, and think or act for himself? Every moment new changes and new showers of deceptions to baffle and distract him. And when, by and by, for an instant, the air clears and the cloud lifts a little, there are the gods still sitting around him on their thrones,—they alone with him alone.

⁸ Compare Emerson's poem, "Hamatreya."

THE RHODORA:

ON BEING ASKED, WHENCE IS THE
FLOWER?

(1834; 1839)

Cf. the following sentences from the section on Beauty in Emerson's *Nature* (1836): "This element [Beauty] I call an ultimate end. No reason can be asked or given why the soul seeks beauty. Beauty, in its largest and profoundest sense, is one expression for the universe." Cf. also the following sentence from his essay on "The Poet": "For the world is not painted, or adorned, but is from the beginning beautiful; and God has not made some beautiful things, but Beauty is the creator of the universe."

Emerson's conception of beauty and art is to be sharply distinguished from that of Poe, who although he might perhaps have written the line,

"Then Beauty is its own excuse for being,"

would not have meant what Emerson had in mind. Cf. *Nature*: "The presence of a higher, namely, of the spiritual element is essential to its [Beauty's] perfection. . . . Beauty is the mark God sets upon virtue."

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
The purple petals, fallen in the pool,
Made the black water with their beauty gay;
Here might the red-bird come his plumes to
cool,

And court the flower that cheapens his array.
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,¹
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for
seeing,

Then beauty is its own excuse for being:
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!

I never thought to ask, I never knew:
But, in my simple ignorance, suppose
The self-same Power that brought me there
brought you.

EACH AND ALL

(1834? 1839)

On May 16, 1834, Emerson wrote in his journal: "I remember when I was a boy going upon the

¹ Compare Gray's well-known lines:

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

beach and being charmed with the colors and forms of the shells. I picked up many and put them in my pocket. When I got home I could find nothing that I gathered—nothing but some dry, ugly mussel and snail shells. Thence I learned that Composition was more important than the beauty of individual forms to Effect."

Little thinks, in the field, yon red-cloaked clown
Of thee from the hill-top looking down;
The heifer that lows in the upland farm,
Far-heard, lows not thine ear to charm;
The sexton, tolling his bell at noon,
Deems not that great Napoleon
Stops his horse, and lists with delight,
Whilst his files sweep round yon Alpine height;
Nor knowest thou what argument
Thy life to thy neighbor's creed has lent.
All are needed by each one;
Nothing is fair or good alone.
I thought the sparrow's note from heaven,
Singing at dawn on the alder bough;
I brought him home, in his nest, at even;
He sings the song, but it cheers not now,
For I did not bring home the river and sky;—
He sang to my ear,—they sang to my eye.
The delicate shells lay on the shore;
The bubbles of the latest wave
Fresh pearls to their enamel gave,
And the bellowing of the savage sea
Greeted their safe escape to me.
I wiped away the weeds and foam,
I fetched my sea-born treasures home;
But the poor, unsightly, noisome things
Had left their beauty on the shore
With the sun and the sand and the wild uproar.
The lover watched his graceful maid,
As 'mid the virgin train she strayed,
Nor knew her beauty's best attire
Was woven still by the snow-white choir.
At last she came to his hermitage,
Like the bird from the woodlands to the cage;—
The gay enchantment was undone,
A gentle wife, but fairy none.
Then I said, "I covet truth;
Beauty is unripe childhood's cheat;
I leave it behind with the games of youth":—
As I spoke, beneath my feet
The ground-pine curled its pretty wreath,
Running over the club-moss burrs;
I inhaled the violet's breath;
Around me stood the oaks and firs;
Pine-cones and acorns lay on the ground;

Over me soared the eternal sky,
Full of light and of deity;
Again I saw, again I heard,
The rolling river, the morning bird;—
5 Beauty through my senses stole;
I yielded myself to the perfect whole.

CONCORD HYMN

SUNG AT THE COMPLETION OF THE BATTLE
MONUMENT, JULY 4, 1837

(1837; 1837)

In the *Selected Poems* (1876) of Emerson this poem—originally sung to the tune of Old Hundred—bears the title, "Concord Fight." It should be compared with Bryant's "The Battle-Field" and Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address." Few productions written for special occasions have the permanent qualities of
20 Emerson's hymn or Lincoln's brief speech.

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood
25 And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
30 Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
35 When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
40 The shaft we raise to them and thee.

THE HUMBLE-BEE

(1837; 1839)

On May 9, 1837, Emerson wrote in his journal: "Yesterday in the woods I followed the fine humble-bee with rhymes and fancies fine."

50 Burly, dozing humble-bee,
Where thou art is clime for me.
Let them sail for Porto Rique,

Far-off heats through seas to seek;
 I will follow thee alone,
 Thou animated torrid-zone!
 Zigzag steerer, desert cheerer,
 Let me chase thy waving lines;
 Keep me nearer, me thy hearer,
 Singing over shrubs and vines.

Insect lover of the sun,
 Joy of thy dominion!
 Sailor of the atmosphere;
 Swimmer through the waves of air;
 Voyager of light and noon;
 Epicurean of June;
 Wait, I prithee, till I come
 Within earshot of thy hum,—
 All without is martyrdom.

When the south wind, in May days,
 With a net of shining haze
 Silvers the horizon wall,
 And with softness touching all,
 Tints the human countenance
 With a color of romance,
 And infusing subtle heats,
 Turns the sod to violets,
 Thou, in sunny solitudes,
 Rover of the underwoods,
 The green silence dost displace
 With thy mellow, breezy bass.

Hot midsummer's petted crone,
 Sweet to me thy drowsy tone
 Tells of countless sunny hours,
 Long days, and solid banks of flowers
 Of gulfs of sweetness without bound
 In Indian wildernesses found;
 Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure,
 Firmest cheer, and bird-like pleasure.

Aught unsavory or unclean
 Hath my insect never seen;
 But violets and bilberry bells,
 Maple-sap and daffodils,
 Grass with green flag half-mast high,
 Succory to match the sky,
 Columbine with horn of honey,
 Scented fern, and agrimony,
 Clover, catchfly, adder's-tongue
 And brier-roses, dwelt among;
 All beside was unknown waste,
 All was picture as he passed.

Wiser far than human seer,
 Yellow-breeched philosopher!
 Seeing only what is fair,
 Sipping only what is sweet,
 5 Thou dost mock at fate and care,
 Leave the chaff, and take the wheat.
 When the fierce northwestern blast
 Cools sea and land so far and fast,
 Thou already slumberest deep;
 10 Woe and want thou canst outsleep;
 Want and woe, which torture us,
 Thy sleep makes ridiculous.

URIEL

(1838; 1846)

20 "The poem," writes Edward W. Emerson, "when read with the history of the Divinity School Address, and its consequences, in mind, is seen to be an account of that event generalized and sublimed,—the announcement of an advance in truth, won not without pain and struggle, to hearers not yet ready,
 25 resulting in banishment to the prophet; yet the spoken word sticks like a barbed arrow, or works like a leaven." For Uriel, the archangel of the Sun, see Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book III, lines 622 ff.

30 It fell in the ancient periods
 Which the brooding soul surveys,
 Or ever the wild Time coined itself
 Into calendar months and days.
 35 This was the lapse of Uriel,
 Which in Paradise befell.
 Once, among the Pleiads walking,
 Seyd overheard the young gods talking;
 And the treason, too long pent,
 40 To his ears was evident.
 The young deities discussed
 Laws of form, and metre just,
 Orb, quintessence, and sunbeams,
 What subsisteth and what seems.
 45 One, with low tones that decide,
 And doubt and reverend use defied,
 With a look that solved the sphere,
 And stirred the devils everywhere,
 Gave his sentiment divine
 50 Against the being of a line.
 "Line in nature is not found;
 Unit and universe are round;

In vain produced, all rays return;
 Evil will bless, and ice will burn."
 As Uriel spoke with piercing eye,
 A shudder ran around the sky,
 The stern old war-gods shook their heads,
 The seraphs frowned from myrtle-beds,
 Seemed to the holy festival
 The rash word boded ill to all;
 The balance-beam of Fate was bent;
 The bounds of good and ill were rent,
 Strong Hades could not keep his own,
 But all slid to confusion.

A sad self-knowledge, withering, fell
 On the beauty of Uriel,
 In heaven once eminent, the god
 Withdrew, that hour, into his cloud;
 Whether doomed to long gyration
 In the sea of generation,
 Or by knowledge grown too bright
 To hit the nerve of feebler sight.
 Straightway, a forgetting wind
 Stole over the celestial kind,
 And their lips the secret kept,
 If in ashes the fire-seed slept.
 But now and then, truth-speaking things
 Shamed the angels' veiling wings;
 And, shrilling from the solar course,
 Or from fruit of chemic force,
 Procession of a soul in matter,
 Or the speeding change of water,
 Or out of the good of evil born,
 Came Uriel's voice of cherub scorn,
 And a blush tinged the upper sky,
 And the gods shook, they knew not why.

THE PROBLEM

(1839; 1840)

This poem, which Emerson first named "The Priest," reveals the nonconformist in an unusual mood. Cf. the two following entries in the *Journals*: "It is very grateful to my feelings to go into a Roman Cathedral, yet I look as my countrymen do at the Roman priesthood. It is very grateful to me to go into an English Church and hear the liturgy read, yet nothing would induce me to be the English priest" (1838) and "I believe in Omnipresence and find foot-steps in grammar rules, in oyster shops, in church liturgies, in mathematics, and in solitudes and in

galaxies I am shamed out of my declamations against churches by the wonderful beauty of the English liturgy, an anthology of the piety of ages and nations" (1847). Cf. also Emerson's essay on Art "The reference of all production at last to an Aboriginal Power explains the traits common to all works of the highest art,—that they are universally intelligible, that they restore to us the simplest states of mind, and are religious . . . In happy hours nature appears to us one with art; art perfected,—the work of genius"

I like a church, I like a cowl;
 I love a prophet of the soul;
 And on my heart monastic aisles
 Fall like sweet strains, or pensive smiles,
 Yet not for all his faith can see
 Would I that cowl'd churchman be.

Why should the vest on him allure,
 Which I could not on me endure?

Not from a vain or shallow thought
 His awful Jove young Phidias brought;
 Never from lips of cunning fell
 The thrilling Delphic oracle;
 Out from the heart of nature rolled
 The burdens of the Bible old;
 The litanies of nations came,
 Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
 Up from the burning core below,—
 The canticles of love and woe:
 The hand that rounded Peter's dome
 And groined the aisles of Christian Rome
 Wrought in a sad sincerity;
 Himself from God he could not free;
 He builded better than he knew;—
 The conscious stone to beauty grew.¹

Know'st thou what wove yon woodbird's nest
 Of leaves, and feathers from her breast?
 Or how the fish outbuilt her shell,
 Painting with morn each annual cell?
 Or how the sacred pine-tree adds
 To her old leaves new myriads?
 Such and so grew these holy piles,
 Whilst love and terror laid the tiles.
 Earth proudly wears the Parthenon,

¹ Cf. the essay on "Poetry and Imagination" in Emerson's *Letters and Social Aims*: "Michael Angelo is largely filled with the Creator that made and makes men. . . . In him and the like perfecter brains the instinct is resistless, knows the right way, is melodious, and at all points divine."

As the best gem upon her zone,
 And Morning opes with haste her lids
 To gaze upon the Pyramids;
 O'er England's abbeys bends the sky,
 As on its friends, with kindred eye;
 For out of Thought's interior sphere
 These wonders rose to upper air;
 And Nature gladly gave them place,
 Adopted them into her race,
 And granted them an equal date
 With Andes and with Ararat.²
 These temples grew as grows the grass;
 Art might obey, but not surpass.
 The passive Master lent his hand
 To the vast soul that o'er him planned;
 And the same power that reared the shrine
 Bestrode the tribes that knelt within.
 Ever the fiery Pentecost
 Girds with one flame the countless host,
 Trances the heart through chanting choirs,
 And through the priest the mind inspires.
 The word unto the prophet spoken
 Was writ on tables yet unbroken;
 The word by seers or sibyls told,
 In groves of oak, or fanes of gold,
 Still floats upon the morning wind,
 Still whispers to the willing mind.
 One accent of the Holy Ghost
 The heedless world hath never lost.
 I know what say the fathers wise,—
 The Book itself before me lies,
 Old *Chrysostom*,³ best Augustine,
 And he who blent both in his line,
 The younger *Golden Lips* or mines,
 Taylor, the Shakespeare of divines.
 His words are music in my ear,
 I see his cowlèd portrait dear;
 And yet, for all his faith could see,
 I would not the good bishop be.

² " . . . 'The Problem' with its magnificent restatement of the character of the creative process and the passage from 'Not from a vain or shallow thought' to 'With Andes and with Ararat' which, to speak on the manner of the old-fashioned critic, is probably the high-water mark of American poetry prior to the work of the present generation" (Ludwig Lewisohn, *Expression in America*, pp. 133-134).

³ On account of his eloquence John of Antioch (347-407) was called Chrysostom, which means Golden Mouth or Golden Lips. Emerson applies the latter term to Jeremy Taylor (1613-1667), author of *Holy Living and Holy Dying*.

WOODNOTES, I

(1840)

- 5 1
 When the pine tosses its cones
 To the song of its waterfall tones,
 Who speeds to the woodland walks?
 To birds and trees who talks?
- 10 Cæsar of his leafy Rome,
 There the poet is at home.
 He goes to the river-side,—
 Not hook nor line hath he;
 He stands in the meadows wide,—
- 15 Nor gun nor scythe to see.
 Sure some god his eye enchants:
 What he knows nobody wants.
 In the wood he travels glad,
 Without better fortune had,
- 20 Melancholy without bad.
 Knowledge this man prizes best
 Seems fantastic to the rest:
 Pondering shadows, colors, clouds,
 Grass-buds and caterpillar-shrouds,
- 25 Boughs on which the wild bees settle,
 Tints that spot the violet's petal,
 Why Nature loves the number five,
 And why the star-form she repeats:
 Lover of all things alive,
- 30 Wonderer at all he meets,
 Wonderer chiefly at himself,
 Who can tell him what he is?
 Or how meet in human elf
 Coming and past eternities?
- 35 2
 And such I knew, a forest seer,
 A minstrel of the natural year,
 Foreteller of the vernal ides,
- 40 Wise harbinger of spheres and tides,
 A lover true, who knew by heart
 Each joy the mountain dales impart;
 It seemed that Nature could not raise
 A plant in any secret place,
- 45 In quaking bog, on snowy hill,
 Beneath the grass that shades the rill,
 Under the snow, between the rocks,
 In damp fields known to bird and fox,
 But he would come in the very hour
- 50 It opened in its virgin bower,
 As if a sunbeam showed the place,
 And tell its long-descended race.

It seemed as if the breezes brought him,
 It seemed as if the sparrows taught him;
 As if by secret sight he knew
 Where, in far fields, the orchis grew.
 Many haps fall in the field
 Seldom seen by wishful eyes,
 But all her shows did Nature yield,
 To please and win this pilgrim wise.
 He saw the partridge drum in the woods;
 He heard the woodcock's evening hymn;
 He found the tawny thrushes' broods;
 And the shy hawk did wait for him;
 What others did at distance hear,
 And guessed within the thicket's gloom,
 Was shown to this philosopher,
 And at his bidding seemed to come.¹

3

In unploughed Maine he sought the lumberers'
 gang
 Where from a hundred lakes young rivers
 sprang;
 He trod the unplanted forest floor, whereon
 The all-seeing sun for ages hath not shone;
 Where feeds the moose, and walks the surly bear,
 And up the tall mast runs the woodpecker.
 He saw beneath dim aisles, in odorous beds,
 The slight Linnæa hang its twin-born heads,
 And blessed the monument of the man of
 flowers,
 Which breathes his sweet fame through the
 northern bowers.
 He heard, when in the grove, at intervals,
 With sudden roar the aged pine-tree falls,—
 One crash, the death-hymn of the perfect tree,
 Declares the close of its green century.
 Low lies the plant to whose creation went
 Sweet influence from every element;
 Whose living towers the years conspired to build,
 Whose giddy top the morning loved to gild.
 Through these green tents, by eldest Nature
 dressed,
 He roamed, content alike with man and beast.
 Where darkness found him he lay glad at night;
 There the red morning touched him with its
 light.
 Three moons his great heart him a hermit made,
 So long he roved at will the boundless shade.

¹ The second section of the poem would serve as an excellent description of Henry David Thoreau, but it is not certain that the poem was written after Emerson had become acquainted with Thoreau.

The timid it concerns to ask their way,
 And fear what foe in caves and swamps can stray,
 To make no step until the event is known,
 And ills to come as evils past bemoan.
 5 Not so the wise; no coward watch he keeps
 To spy what danger on his pathway creeps;
 Go where he will, the wise man is at home,
 His hearth the earth,—his hall the azure dome;
 Where his clear spirit leads him, there's his road
 10 By God's own light illumined and foreshowed.

4

'Twas one of the charmed days
 When the genius of God doth flow;
 15 The wind may alter twenty ways,
 A tempest cannot blow;
 It may blow north, it still is warm;
 Or south, it still is clear;
 Or east, it smells like a clover-farm;
 20 Or west, no thunder fear.
 The musing peasant, lowly great,
 Beside the forest water sate;
 The rope-like pine-roots crosswise grown
 Composed the network of his throne,
 25 The wide lake, edged with sand and grass,
 Was burnished to a floor of glass,
 Painted with shadows green and proud
 Of the tree and of the cloud.
 He was the heart of all the scene;
 30 On him the sun looked more serene;
 To hill and cloud his face was known,—
 It seemed the likeness of their own;
 They knew by secret sympathy
 The public child of earth and sky.
 35 "You ask," he said, "what guide
 Me through trackless thickets led,
 Through thick-stemmed woodlands rough and
 wide,
 I found the water's bed.
 40 The watercourses were my guide;
 I travelled grateful by their side,
 Or through their channel dry;
 They led me through the thicket damp,
 Through brake and fern, the beavers' camp,
 45 Through beds of granite cut my road,
 And their resistless friendship showed.
 The falling waters led me,
 The foodful waters fed me,
 And brought me to the lowest land,
 50 Unerring to the ocean sand.
 The moss upon the forest bark
 Was pole-star when the night was dark;

The purple berries in the wood
 Supplied me necessary food;
 For Nature ever faithful is
 To such as trust her faithfulness.
 When the forest shall mislead me,
 When the night and morning lie,
 When sea and land refuse to feed me,
 'Twill be time enough to die;
 Then will yet my mother yield
 A pillow in her greenest field,
 Nor the June flowers scorn to cover
 The clay of their departed lover."

FRIENDSHIP

(1841)

This poem is the motto which Emerson prefixed to his essay on "Friendship" in *Essays, First Series*.

A ruddy drop of manly blood
 The surging sea outweighs,
 The world uncertain comes and goes;
 The lover rooted stays.
 I fancied he was fled,—
 And, after many a year,
 Glowed unexhausted kindness,
 Like daily sunrise there.
 My careful heart was free again,
 O friend, my bosom said,
 Through thee alone the sky is arched,
 Through thee the rose is red;
 All things through thee take nobler form,
 And look beyond the earth,
 The mill-round of our fate appears
 A sun-path in thy worth.
 Me too thy nobleness has taught
 To master my despair;
 The fountains of my hidden life
 Are through thy friendship fair.

THE SNOW-STORM

(1841)

Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
 Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
 Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
 Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,
 And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
 The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
 Delayed, all friends shut out, the house-mates sit
 Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
 In a tumultuous privacy of storm.

Come see the north wind's masonry.
 Out of an unseen quarry evermore
 Furnished with tile, the fierce artificer
 Curves his white bastions with projected roof
 5 Round every windward stake, or tree, or door.
 Speeding, the myriad-handed, his wild work
 So fanciful, so savage, nought cares he
 For number or proportion. Mockingly,
 On coop or kennel he hangs Parian wreaths;
 10 A swan-like form invests the hidden thorn;
 Fills up the farmer's lane from wall to wall,
 Maugre the farmer's sighs; and at the gate
 A tapering turret overtops the work.
 And when his hours are numbered, and the
 15 world
 Is all his own, retiring, as he were not,
 Leaves, when the sun appears, astonished Art
 To mimic in slow structures, stone by stone,
 Built in an age, the mad wind's night-work,
 20 The frolic architecture of the snow.

FABLE

(1846)

25 The mountain and the squirrel
 Had a quarrel,
 And the former called the latter "Little Prig";
 Bun replied,
 30 "You are doubtless very big;
 But all sorts of things and weather
 Must be taken in together,
 To make up a year
 And a sphere.
 35 And I think it no disgrace
 To occupy my place.
 If I'm not so large as you,
 You are not so small as I,
 And not half so spry.
 40 I'll not deny you make
 A very pretty squirrel track;
 Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;
 If I cannot carry forests on my back,
 Neither can you crack a nut."

45

THRENODY

(1846)

50 The subject of this elegy is Emerson's little son
 Waldo, who died in January, 1842. Soon afterwards
 Emerson wrote to Carlyle: "My son, a perfect little

boy of five years and three months, has ended his earthly life. You can never sympathize with me, you can never know how much of me such a young child can take away. A few weeks ago I accounted myself a very rich man, and now the poorest of all . . . From a perfect health and as happy influences as ever child enjoyed, he was hurried out of my arms in three short days by scarlatina. . . I dare not fathom the Invisible and Untold to inquire what relations to my Departed ones I yet sustain." The latter portion of the poem, beginning with line 176,

The deep Heart answered, "Weepest thou? . . ."

was not written, says Edward W. Emerson, "until Time and Thought had brought their healing."

The South-wind brings
Life, sunshine and desire,
And on every mount and meadow
Breathes aromatic fire;
But over the dead he has no power,
The lost, the lost, he cannot restore;
And, looking over the hills, I mourn
The darling who shall not return.

I see my empty house,
I see my trees repair their boughs;
And he, the wondrous child,
Whose silver warble wild
Outvalued every pulsing sound
Within the air's cerulean round,—
The hyacinthine boy, for whom
Morn well might break and April bloom,
The gracious boy, who did adorn
The world whereinto he was born,
And by his countenance repay
The favor of the loving Day,—
Has disappeared from the Day's eye;
Far and wide she cannot find him;
My hopes pursue, they cannot bind him.
Returned this day, the South-wind searches,
And finds young pines and budding birches;
But finds not the budding man;
Nature, who lost, cannot remake him;
Fate let him fall, Fate can't retake him;
Nature, Fate, men, him seek in vain.

And whither now, my truant wise and sweet,
O, whither tend thy feet?
I had the right, few days ago,
Thy steps to watch, thy place to know:
How have I forfeited the right?
Hast thou forgot me in a new delight?

• 848 •

I hearken for thy household cheer,
O eloquent child!
Whose voice, an equal messenger,
Conveyed thy meaning mild.
5 What though the pains and joys
Whereof it spoke were toys
Fitting his age and ken,
Yet fairest dames and bearded men,
Who heard the sweet request,
10 So gentle, wise and grave,
Bended with joy to his behest
And let the world's affairs go by,
A while to share his cordial game,
Or mend his wicker wagon-frame,
15 Still plotting how their hungry ear
That winsome voice again might hear;
For his lips could well pronounce
Words that were persuasions.
20 Gentlest guardians marked serene
His early hope, his liberal mien;
Took counsel from his guiding eyes
To make this wisdom earthly wise.
Ah, vainly do these eyes recall
25 The school-march, each day's festival,
When every morn my bosom glowed
To watch the convoy on the road;
The babe in willow wagon closed,
With rolling eyes and face composed;
30 With children forward and behind;
Like Cupids studiously inclined;
And he the chieftain paced beside,
The centre of the troop allied,
With sunny face of sweet repose,
35 To guard the babe from fancied foes.
The little captain innocent
Took the eye with him as he went;
Each village senior paused to scan
And speak the lovely caravan.
40 From the window I look out
To mark thy beautiful parade,
Stately marching in cap and coat
To some tune by fairies played;—
A music heard by thee alone
45 To works as noble led thee on.
Now Love and Pride, alas! in vain,
Up and down their glances strain.
The painted sled stands where it stood;
50 The kennel by the corded wood;
His gathered sticks to stanch the wall
Of the snow-tower, when snow should fall;

The ominous hole he dug in the sand,
 And childhood's castles built or planned,
 His daily haunts I will discern,—
 The poultry-yard, the shed, the barn,—
 And every inch of garden ground
 Paced by the blessed feet around,
 From the roadside to the brook
 Whereinto he loved to look.
 Step the meek fowls where erst they ranged;
 The wintry garden lies unchanged;
 The brook into the stream runs on;
 But the deep-eyed boy is gone.

On that shaded day,
 Dark with more clouds than tempests are,
 When thou didst yield thy innocent breath
 In birdlike heavings unto death,
 Night came, and Nature had not thee;
 I said, "We are mates in misery."
 The morrow dawned with needless glow;
 Each snowbird chirped, each fowl must crow;
 Each tramper started; but the feet
 Of the most beautiful and sweet
 Of human youth had left the hill
 And garden,—they were bound and still.
 There's not a sparrow or a wren,
 There's not a blade of autumn grain,
 Which the four seasons do not tend
 And tides of life and increase lend;
 And every chick of every bird,
 And weed and rock-moss is preferred.
 O ostrich-like forgetfulness!
 O loss of larger in the less!
 Was there no star that could be sent,
 No watcher in the firmament,
 No angel from the countless host
 That loiters round the crystal coast,
 Could stoop to heal that only child,
 Nature's sweet marvel undefiled,
 And keep the blossom of the earth,
 Which all her harvests were not worth?
 Not mine,—I never called thee mine,
 But Nature's heir,—if I repine,
 And seeing rashly torn and moved
 Not what I made, but what I loved,
 Grow early old with grief that thou
 Must to the wastes of Nature go,—
 'Tis because a general hope
 Was quenched, and all must doubt and grope.
 For flattering planets seemed to say
 This child should ills of ages stay,
 By wondrous tongue, and guided pen,

Bring the flown Muses back to men.
 Perchance not he but Nature ailed,
 The world and not the infant failed.
 It was not ripe yet to sustain
 5 A genius of so fine a strain,
 Who gazed upon the sun and moon
 As if he came unto his own,
 And, pregnant with his grander thought,
 Brought the old order into doubt.
 10 His beauty once their beauty tried;
 They could not feed him, and he died,
 And wandered backward as in scorn,
 To wait an æon to be born.
 Ill day which made this beauty waste,
 15 Plight broken, this high face defaced!
 Some went and came about the dead;
 And some in books of solace read;
 Some to their friends the tidings say;
 Some went to write, some went to pray;
 20 One tarried here, there hurried one;
 But their heart abode with none.
 Covetous death bereaved us all,
 To aggrandize one funeral.
 The eager fate which carried thee
 25 Took the largest part of me:
 For this losing is true dying;
 This is lordly man's down-lying,
 This his slow but sure reclining,
 Star by star his world resigning.
 30 O child of paradise,
 Boy who made dear his father's home,
 In whose deep eyes
 Men read the welfare of the times to come,
 35 I am too much bereft.
 The world dishonored thou hast left.
 O truth's and nature's costly lie!
 O trusted broken prophecy!
 O richest fortune sourly crossed!
 40 Born for the future, to the future lost!
 The deep Heart answered, "Weepest thou?
 Worthier cause for passion wild
 If I had not taken the child.
 45 And deemest thou as those who pore,
 With aged eyes, short way before,—
 Think'st Beauty vanished from the coast
 Of matter, and thy darling lost?
 Taught he not thee—the man of old,
 50 Whose eyes within his eyes beheld
 Heaven's numerous hierarchy span
 The mystic gulf from God to man?

To be alone wilt thou begin
 When worlds of lovers hem thee in?
 To-morrow, when the masks shall fall
 That dizen Nature's carnival,
 The pure shall see by their own will,
 Which overflowing Love shall fill,
 'Tis not within the force of fate
 The fate-conjoined to separate.
 But thou, my votary, weepest thou?
 I gave thee sight—where is it now?
 I taught thy heart beyond the reach
 Of ritual, bible, or of speech;
 Wrote in thy mind's transparent table,
 As far as the incommunicable;
 Taught thee each private sign to raise
 Lit by the supersolar blaze.
 Past utterance, and past belief,
 And past the blasphemy of grief,
 The mysteries of Nature's heart;
 And though no Muse can these impart,
 Throb thine with Nature's throbbing breast,
 And all is clear from east to west.

"I came to thee as to a friend;
 Dearest, to thee I did not send
 Tutors, but a joyful eye,
 Innocence that matched the sky,
 Lovely locks, a form of wonder,
 Laughter rich as woodland thunder,
 That thou might'st entertain apart
 The richest flowering of all art:
 And, as the great all-loving Day
 Through smallest chambers takes its way,
 That thou might'st break thy daily bread
 With prophet, savior and head;
 That thou might'st cherish for thine own
 The riches of sweet Mary's Son,
 Boy-Rabbi, Israel's paragon.
 And thoughtest thou such guest
 Would in thy hall take up his rest?
 Would rushing life forget her laws,
 Fate's glowing revolution pause?
 High omens ask diviner guess;
 Not to be conned to tediousness.
 And know my higher gifts unbind
 The zone that girds the incarnate mind.
 When the scanty shores are full
 With Thought's perilous, whirling pool;
 When frail Nature can no more,
 Then the Spirit strikes the hour:
 My servant Death, with solving rite,
 Pours finite into infinite.

Wilt thou freeze love's tidal flow,
 Whose streams through Nature circling go?
 Nail the wild star to its track
 On the half-climbed zodiac?
 5 Light is light which radiates,
 Blood is blood which circulates,
 Life is life which generates,
 And many-seeming life is one,—
 Wilt thou transfix and make it none?
 10 Its onward force too starkly pent
 In figure, bone and lineament?
 Wilt thou, uncalled, interrogate,
 Talker! the unreplying Fate?
 Nor see the genius of the whole
 15 Ascendant in the private soul,
 Beckon it when to go and come,
 Self-announced its hour of doom?
 Fair the soul's recess and shrine,
 Magic-built to last a season;
 20 Masterpiece of love benign,
 Fairer than expansive reason
 Whose omen 'tis, and sign.
 Wilt thou not ope thy heart to know
 What rainbows teach, and sunsets show?
 25 Verdict which accumulates
 From lengthening scroll of human fates,
 Voice of earth to earth returned,
 Prayers of saints that inly burned,—
 Saying, *What is excellent,*
 30 *As God lives, is permanent;*
Hearts are dust, hearts' loves remain;
Heart's love will meet thee again.
 Revere the Maker, fetch thine eye
 Up to his style, and manners of the sky.
 35 Not of adamant and gold
 Built he heaven stark and cold;
 No, but a nest of bending reeds,
 Flowering grass and scented weeds;
 Or like a traveller's fleeing tent,
 40 Or bow above the tempest bent;
 Built of tears and sacred flames,
 And virtue reaching to its aims;
 Built of furtherance and pursuing,
 Not of spent deeds, but of doing.
 45 Silent rushes the swift Lord
 Through ruined systems still restored,
 Broadsowing, bleak and void to bless,
 Plants with worlds the wilderness;
 Waters with tears of ancient sorrow
 50 Apples of Eden ripe to-morrow.
 House and tenant go to ground,
 Lost in God, in Godhead found."

THE WORLD-SOUL

(1846)

George Willis Cooke writes in his life of Emerson.
 "Around Plotinus . . . there grew up a distinct
 school of thought, teaching the philosophic doctrine
 of subject and object, mind and matter, and making
 intuition the method of knowing. One of his disciples
 was Porphyry, who distinctly taught that matter
 emanates from . . . the soul. Amelius departed so
 far from Plotinus as to teach the unity of all souls in
 the World-Soul, a favorite doctrine of Emerson's."
 For the Neo-Platonists mentioned above, see J. S.
 Harrison, *The Teachers of Emerson*.

Thanks to the morning light,
 Thanks to the foaming sea,
 To the uplands of New Hampshire,
 To the green-haired forest tree;
 Thanks to each man of courage,
 To the maids of holy mind,
 To the boy with his games undaunted
 Who never looks behind.

Cities of proud hotels,
 Houses of rich and great,
 Vice nestles in your chambers,
 Beneath your roofs of slate.
 It cannot conquer folly,—
 Time-and-space-conquering steam,—
 And the light-outspeeding telegraph
 Bears nothing on its beam.

The politics are base;
 The letters do not cheer;
 And 'tis far in the deeps of history,
 The voice that speaketh clear.
 Trade and the streets ensnare us,
 Our bodies are weak and worn;
 We plot and corrupt each other,
 And we despoil the unborn.

Yet there in the parlor sits
 Some figure of noble guise,—
 Our angel, in a stranger's form,
 Or woman's pleading eyes;
 Or only a flashing sunbeam
 In at the window-pane;
 Or Music pours on mortals
 Its beautiful disdain.

The inevitable morning
 Finds them who in cellars be;

And be sure the all-loving Nature
 Will smile in a factory
 Yon ridge of purple landscape,
 Yon sky between the walls,
 Hold all the hidden wonders
 In scanty intervals.

Alas! the Sprite that haunts us
 Deceives our rash desire,
 It whispers of the glorious gods,
 And leaves us in the mire.
 We cannot learn the cipher
 That's writ upon our cell;
 Stars taunt us by a mystery
 Which we could never spell.

If but one hero knew it,
 The world would blush in flame;
 The sage, till he hit the secret,
 Would hang his head for shame.
 Our brothers have not read it,
 Not one has found the key;
 And henceforth we are comforted,—
 We are but such as they.

Still, still the secret presses;
 The nearing clouds draw down;
 The crimson morning flames into
 The fopperies of the town.
 Within, without the idle earth,
 Stars weave eternal rings;
 The sun himself shines heartily,
 And shares the joy he brings.

And what if Trade sow cities
 Like shells along the shore,
 And thatch with towns the prairie broad
 With railways ironed o'er?—
 They are but sailing foam-bells
 Along Thought's causing stream,
 And take their shape and sun-color
 From him that sends the dream.

For Destiny never swerves
 Nor yields to men the helm;
 He shoots his thought, by hidden nerves,
 Throughout the solid realm.
 The patient Dæmon sits,
 With roses and a shroud;
 He has his way, and deals his gifts,—
 But ours is not allowed.

He is no churl nor trifler,
And his viceroys are none,—
Love-without-weakness,—
Of Genius sire and son.
And his will is not thwarted;
The seeds of land and sea
Are the atoms of his body bright,
And his behest obey.

He serveth the servant,
The brave he loves amain;
He kills the cripple and the sick,
And straight begins again;
For gods delight in gods,
And thrust the weak aside;
To him who scorns their charities
Their arms fly open wide.

When the old world is sterile
And the ages are effete,
He will from wrecks and sediment
The fairer world complete.
He forbids to despair;
His cheeks mantle with mirth;
And the unimagined good of men
Is yeaving at the birth.

Spring still makes spring in the mind
When sixty years are told;
Love wakes anew this throbbing heart,
And we are never old;
Over the winter glaciers
I see the summer glow,
And through the wild-piled snow-drift
The warm rosebuds below.

ODE

INSCRIBED TO W. H. CHANNING
(1846)

The nephew of the great Unitarian divine had apparently been urging Emerson to take an active part in the Abolition agitation. The poem gives Emerson's explanation of his position. He was opposed to slavery and did on occasion speak out, but, as he said, "I have quite other slaves to free than those negroes, to wit, imprisoned spirits, imprisoned thoughts." He thought that the national government should buy the slaves and free them. For Emerson's attitude toward reform and reformers, see his lecture, "New England Reformers." While he sympathized more with the reformers than with the conservatives,

he felt the weakness of the radical reformers. In the lecture referred to he says:

5 " . . . Alas! my good friend, there is no part of society or of life better than any other part. All our things are right and wrong together. The wave of evil washes all our institutions alike. Do you complain of our Marriage? Our marriage is no worse than our education, our diet, our trade, our social customs.

10 "I cannot afford to be irritable and captious, nor to waste all my time in attacks. If I should go out of church whenever I hear a false sentiment, I could never stay there five minutes. But why come out? the street is as false as the church, and when I get to my house, or to my manners, or to my speech, I have not got away from the lie. When we see an eager assailant of one of these wrongs, a special reformer, we feel like asking him, What right have you, sir, to your one virtue? Is virtue piecemeal? This is a jewel amidst the rags of a beggar."

20 Lines 52-57 have been often quoted by the New Humanists

Though loath to grieve
The evil time's sole patriot,
I cannot leave
25 My honeyed thought
For the priest's cant
Or statesman's rant.

If I refuse
30 My study for their politique,
Which at the best is trick,
The angry Muse
Puts confusion in my brain.

35 But who is he that prates
Of the culture of mankind,
Of better arts and life?
Go, blindworm, go,
Behold the famous States
40 Harrying Mexico
With rifle and with knife!

Or who, with accent bolder,
Dare praise the freedom-loving mountaineer?
45 I found by thee, O rushing Contoocook!
And in thy valleys, Agiochook!
The jackals of the negro-holder.¹

The God who made New Hampshire
50 Taunted the lofty land

¹ Many of the overseers on Southern slave plantations came from New England. Cf. Simon Legree in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

With little men;—
 Small bat and wren
 House in the oak:—
 If earth-fire cleave
 The upheaved land, and bury the folk,
 The southern crocodile would grieve.
 Virtue palters; Right is hence;
 Freedom praised, but hid;
 Funeral eloquence
 Rattles the coffin-lid.

What boots thy zeal,
 O glowing friend,
 That would indignant rend
 The northland from the south?
 Wherefore? to what good end?
 Boston Bay and Bunker Hill
 Would serve things still;—
 Things are of the snake.

The horseman serves the horse,
 The neatherd serves the neat,
 The merchant serves the purse,
 The eater serves his meat;
 'Tis the day of the chattel,
 Web to weave, and corn to grind;
 Things are in the saddle,
 And ride mankind.

There are two laws discrete,
 Not reconciled,—
 Law for man, and law for thing;
 The last builds town and flect,
 But it runs wild,
 And doth the man unking.

'Tis fit the forest fall,
 The steep be graded,
 The mountain tunnelled,
 The sand shaded,
 The orchard planted,
 The glebe tilled,
 The prairie granted,
 The steamer built.

Let man serve law for man;
 Life for friendship, live for love,
 For truth's and harmony's behoof;
 The state may follow how it can,
 As Olympus follows Jove.

Yet do not I implore
 The wrinkled shopman to my sounding woods,

Nor bid the unwilling senator
 Ask votes of thrushes in the solitudes.
 Every one to his chosen work;—
 Foolish hands may mix and mar;
 5 Wise and sure the issues are.
 Round they roll till dark is light,
 Sex to sex, and even to odd;—
 The over-god
 Who marries Right to Might,
 10 Who peoples, unpeoples,—
 He who exterminates
 Races by stronger races,
 Black by white faces,—
 Knows to bring honey
 15 Out of the lion;
 Grafts gentlest scion
 On pirate and Turk.

 The Cossack eats Poland,
 20 Like stolen fruit;
 Her last noble is ruined,
 Her last poet mute:
 Straight, into double band
 The victors divide;
 25 Half for freedom strike and stand;—
 The astonished Muse finds thousands at her side.

30 **HAMATREYA**
 (1846)

This poem is based on a passage in the *Vishnu Purana* which Emerson copied in his journal in 1845.
 35 Here are a few lines: "These and other kings who with perishable frames have possessed this ever-during world, and who, blinded with deceptive notions of individual occupation, have indulged the feeling that suggests 'This earth is mine,—it is my son's,—it belongs to my dynasty,'—have all passed away. . . .
 40 Earth laughs, as if smiling with autumnal flowers to behold her kings unable to effect the subjugation of themselves." The names in the opening line of the poem are those of early settlers in Concord.
 45 Bulkeley, Hunt, Willard, Hosmer, Meriam, Flint
 Possessed the land which rendered to their toil
 Hay, corn, roots, hemp, flax, apples, wool and
 wood.
 Each of these landlords walked amidst his farm,
 50 Saying, "'Tis mine, my children's and my
 name's.
 How sweet the west wind sounds in my own
 trees!

How graceful climb those shadows on my hill!
I fancy these pure waters and the flags
Know me, as does my dog: we sympathize;
And, I affirm, my actions smack of the soil."

5

Where are these men? Asleep beneath their
grounds:
And strangers, fond as they, their furrows plough.
Earth laughs in flowers, to see her boastful boys
Earth-proud, proud of the earth which is not 10
theirs;

Who steer the plough, but cannot steer their feet
Clear of the grave
They added ridge to valley, brook to pond,
And sighed for all that bounded their domain; 15
"This suits me for a pasture; that's my park;
We must have clay, lime, gravel, granite-ledge,
And misty lowland, where to go for peat.
The land is well,—lies fairly to the south.
'Tis good, when you have crossed the sea and 20
back,
To find the sitfast acres where you left them."
Ah! the hot owner sees not Death, who adds
Him to his land, a lump of mould the more.
Hear what the Earth says:— 25

EARTH-SONG

"Mine and yours;
Mine, not yours.
Earth endures; 30
Stars abide—
Shine down in the old sea;
Old are the shores;
But where are old men?
I who have seen much, 35
Such have I never seen.

"The lawyer's deed
Ran sure,
In tail, 40
To them, and to their heirs
Who shall succeed,
Without fail,
Forevermore.

"Here is the land,
Shaggy with wood,
With its old valley,
Mound and flood.
But the heritors?— 50
Fled like the flood's foam.
The lawyer, and the laws,

And the kingdom,
Clean swept herefrom.

"They called me theirs,
Who so controlled me,
Yet every one
Wished to stay, and is gone,
How am I theirs,
If they cannot hold me,
But I hold them?"

When I heard the Earth-song
I was no longer brave;
My avarice cooled
Like lust in the chill of the grave.

GIVE ALL TO LOVE

(1846)

Give all to love;
Obey thy heart;
Friends, kindred, days,
Estate, good-fame,
Plans, credit and the Muse,—
Nothing refuse.

'Tis a brave master;
Let is have scope:
Follow it utterly,
Hope beyond hope:
High and more high
It dives into noon,
With wing unspent,
Untold intent;
But it is a god,
Knows its own path
And the outlets of the sky.

It was never for the mean;
It requireth courage stout.
Souls above doubt,
Valor unbending,
It will reward,—
They shall return
More than they were,
And ever ascending.

Leave all for love;
Yet, hear me, yet,
One word more thy heart behoved,
One pulse more of firm endeavor,—

Keep thee to-day,
To-morrow, forever,
Free as an Arab
Of thy beloved.

Cling with life to the maid;
But when the surprise,
First vague shadow of surmise
Flits across her bosom young,
Of a joy apart from thee,
Free be she, fancy-free;
Nor thou detain her vesture's hem,
Nor the palest rose she flung
From her summer diadem.

Though thou loved her as thyself,
As a self of purer clay,
Though her parting dims the day,
Stealing grace from all alive;
Heartily know,
When half-gods go,
The gods arrive.

DAYS

(1851?; 1857)

Emerson, who once said he thought "Days" perhaps his best poem, wrote in his journal in 1852:

"... I have written within a twelvemonth verses (Days) which I do not remember the composition or correction of, and could not write the like to-day, and have only, for proof of their being mine, various external evidences, as the manuscripts in which I find them, and the circumstance that I have sent copies of them to friends, etc."

Cf. the following passage from the essay, "Works and Days," in Emerson's *Society and Solitude*:

"The days are ever divine as to the first Aryans. . . . They come and go like muffled and veiled figures, sent from a distant friendly party; but they say nothing, and if we do not use the gifts they bring, they carry them as silently away."

See E. S. Oliver, "Emerson's 'Days,'" *New England Quarterly*, XIX, 518-524 (December, 1946).

Daughters of Time, the hypocritic Days,
Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,
And marching single in an endless file,
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.
To each they offer gifts after his will,

Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them
all.

I, in my pleached garden, watched the pomp,
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily

5 Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day
Turned and departed silent I, too late,
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

10

BRAHMA

(1857)

Lowell, who printed this poem in the first number of the *Atlantic Monthly*, wrote to Emerson: "You have seen, no doubt, how the Philistines have been parodying your 'Brahma' and showing how they still believe in their special god Baal, and are unable to arrive at a conception of an omnipresent Deity."

15 In *My Own Story*, J. T. Trowbridge thus describes the effect created by the poem: "It was more talked about and puzzled over and parodied than any other poem of sixteen lines published within my recollection. 'What does it mean?' was the question readers everywhere asked, and if one had the reputation of seeing a little way into the Concord philosophy, he was liable at any time to be stopped on the street by some perplexed inquirer, who would draw him into the nearest doorway, produce a crumpled newspaper clipping from the recesses of a waistcoat pocket, and, with knitted brows, exclaim, 'Here! you think you understand Emerson, now tell me what all this is about,—If the red slayer think he slays,' and so forth."

20 "Brahma," as Frederic I. Carpenter points out, "was developed out of snatches of the ancient Hindu Scriptures" ("Immortality from India," *American Literature*, I, 237, November, 1929; see the entire article or the discussion in Dr. Carpenter's book *Emerson and Asia*).

Cf. the following passage from Emerson's essay on Plato: "In all nations there are minds which incline to dwell in the conception of the fundamental Unity. . . . This tendency finds its highest expression in the religious writings of the East, and chiefly in the Indian Scriptures . . ."

If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

50

Far or forgot to me is near;
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out,
When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

SEASHORE

(1857; 1867)

In July, 1857, the Emersons spent two weeks at Pigeon Cove on Cape Ann. On the day after their return to Concord, Emerson said to his wife "I came in yesterday from walking on the rocks and wrote down what the sea had said to me; and to-day, when I open my book, I find it all reads as blank verse, with scarcely a change" (Cf. the passage in the *Journals* dated July 3, 1857.)

I heard or seemed to hear the chiding Sea
Say, Pilgrim, why so late and slow to come?
Am I not always here, thy summer home?
Is not my voice thy music, morn and eve?
My breath thy healthful climate in the heats,
My touch thy antidote, my bay thy bath?
Was ever building like my terraces?
Was ever couch magnificent as mine?
Lie on the warm rock-ledges, and there learn
A little hut suffices like a town,
I make your sculptured architecture vain,
Vain beside mine. I drive my wedges home,
And carve the coastwise mountain into caves.
Lo! here is Rome and Nineveh and Thebes,
Karnak and Pyramid and Giant's Stairs
Half piled or prostrate; and my newest slab
Older than all thy race.

Behold the Sea,
The opaline, the plentiful and strong,
Yet beautiful as is the rose in June,
Fresh as the trickling rainbow of July;
Sea full of food, the nourisher of kinds,
Purger of earth, and medicine of men;
Creating a sweet climate by my breath,
Washing out harms and griefs from memory,
And, in my mathematic ebb and flow,
Giving a hint of that which changes not.
Rich are the sea-gods:—who gives gifts but they?

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They grope the sea for pearls, but more than
pearls:

They pluck Force thence, and give it to the wise.
For every wave is wealth to Dædalus,

5 Wealth to the cunning artist who can work
This matchless strength. Where shall he find,
O waves!

A load your Atlas shoulders cannot lift?

10 I with my hammer pounding evermore
The rocky coast, smite Andes into dust,
Strewing my bed, and, in another age,
Rebuild a continent of better men.
Then I unbait the doors: my paths lead out
15 The exodus of nations: I disperse
Men to all shores that front the hoary main.

I too have arts and sorceries;
Illusion dwells forever with the wave.

20 I know what spells are laid. Leave me to deal
With credulous and imaginative man;
For, though he scoop my water in his palm,
A few rods off he deems it gems and clouds.
Planting strange fruits and sunshine on the
25 shore,
I make some coast alluring, some lone isle,
To distant men, who must go there, or die.

THE TEST

(*Musa loquitur.*)

(1861)

In a sequel to the following poem entitled "Solution," Emerson explains that the five poetic teachers of the race are Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Swedenborg, and Goethe.

I hung my verses in the wind,
Time and tide their faults may find.
All were winnowed through and through,
Five lines lasted sound and true;
Five were melted in a pot
Than the South more fierce and hot;
45 These the siroc could not melt,
Fire their fiercer flaming felt,
And the meaning was more white
Than July's meridian light.
Sunshine cannot bleach the snow,
Nor time unmake what poets know.
50 Have you eyes to find the five
Which five hundred did survive?

TERMINUS

(1866; 1867)

Terminus was the Roman deity who presided over boundaries and landmarks Emerson's son writes

"In the last days of 1866, when I was returning from a long stay in the Western States, I met my father in New York just starting for his usual winter lecturing trip, in those days extending beyond the Mississippi. We spent the night together at the St. Denis Hotel, and as we sat by the fire he read me two or three of his poems for the new May-Day volume, among them 'Terminus.' It almost startled me. No thought of his ageing had ever come to me, and there he sat, with no apparent abatement of bodily vigor, and young in spirit, recognizing with serene acquiescence his failing forces, I think he smiled as he read. He recognized, as none of us did, that his working days were nearly done. They lasted about five years longer, although he lived, in comfortable health, yet ten years beyond those of his activity. Almost at the time when he wrote 'Terminus' he wrote in his journal:—

"'Within I do not find wrinkles and used heart, but unspent youth.'"

"Terminus" should be compared with other notable poems dealing with old age, such as Browning's "Rabbi Ben Ezra," Matthew Arnold's "Growing Old," Longfellow's "Mortui Salutamus," Massfield's "On Growing Old," Robinson's "Isaac and Archibald," etc.

It is time to be old,
To take in sail:—
The god of bounds,
Who sets to seas a shore,
Came to me in his fatal rounds,
And said: "No more!
No farther shoot
Thy broad ambitious branches, and thy root.
Fancy departs: no more invent;
Contract thy firmament
To compass of a tent.
There's not enough for this and that,
Make thy option which of two;
Economize the failing river,
Not the less revere the Giver,
Leave the many and hold the few.
Timely wise accept the terms,
Softened the fall with wary foot;
A little while
Still plan and smile,
And,—fault of novel germs,—
Mature the unfallen fruit.

Curse, if thou wilt, thy sires,
Bad husbands of their fires,
Who when they gave thee breath,
Failed to bequeath

5 The needful sinew stark as once,
The Baresark marrow to thy bones,
But left a legacy of ebbing veins,
Inconstant heat and nerveless reins,—
Amid the Muses, left thee deaf and dumb,
10 Amid the gladiators, halt and numb."

As the bird trims her to the gale,
I trim myself to the storm of time,
I man the rudder, reef the sail,
15 Obey the voice at eve obeyed at prime:
"Lowly faithful, banish fear,
Right onward drive unharmed;
The port, well worth the cruise, is near,
And every wave is charmed."

20

MUSIC

(1883)

25 Let me go where'er I will,
I hear a sky-born music still:
It sounds from all things old,
It sounds from all things young,
From all that's fair, from all that's foul,
30 Peals out a cheerful song.

It is not only in the rose,
It is not only in the bird,
Not only where the rainbow glows,
35 Nor in the song of woman heard,
But in the darkest, meanest things
There alway, alway something stings.

"Tis not in the high stars alone,
40 Nor in the cup of budding flowers,
Nor in the redbreast's mellow tone,
Nor in the bow that smiles in showers,
But in the mud and scum of things
There alway, alway something sings.

45

THE ENCHANTER

(1883)

In 1866 Emerson wrote in his journal: "The
50 maiden has no guess what the youth sees in her. It
is not in her, but in his eyes, which rain on her the
tints and forms and grace of Eden; as the Sun,

AMERICAN RENAISSANCE-----1830-1870

deluging the landscape with his beams, makes the world he smiles upon." Compare the essay, "Illusions "

In the deep heart of man a poet dwells
Who all the day of life his summer story tells;
Scatters on every eye dust of his spells,
Scent, form and color, to the flowers and shells
Wins the believing child with wondrous tales;
Touches a cheek with colors of romance,

And crowds a history into a glance,
Gives beauty to the lake and fountain,
Spies oversea the fires of the mountain;
When thrushes ope their throat, 'tis he that
5 sings,
And he that paints the oriole's fiery wings.
The little Shakespeare in the maiden's heart
Makes Romeo of a plough-boy on his cart;
Opens the eye to Virtue's starlike meed
10 And gives persuasion to a gentle deed.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

1817 - 1862

I seem to see somewhat more of my own kith and kin in the lichens on the rocks than in any books. It does seem as if mine were a peculiarly wild nature, which so yearns toward all wildness.

—THOREAU, *Journals*, VII, 296 (December 15, 1841).

The fact is I am a mystic, a transcendentalist, and a natural philosopher to boot.

—THOREAU, *Journals*, XI, 4 (March 5, 1853).

Henry David Thoreau (in Concord the name is pronounced Thō'ro), the only one of the Concord writers who was a native of the village, was born there on July 12, 1817. He was the youngest of the New England group with the exception of Lowell, who was his opposite in most respects. Thoreau's family, unlike those of most New England writers, was undistinguished and consisted, says F. B. Sanborn, of "small merchants, artisans, or farmers, mostly." On his mother's side he was English and Scotch. His paternal ancestors came from the island of Jersey in the English Channel; and as the name Thoreau suggests, there was a French strain in him, as in Philip Freneau.

With some financial difficulties he made his way through Harvard College, where he was graduated in 1837. Jones Very, the Transcendentalist poet, was his tutor in Greek. Thoreau became perhaps the best Greek scholar among the Transcendentalists, but unlike Emerson, he seems to have cared little for Plato. Other important literary influences were the English poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and, somewhat later, the Oriental Scriptures, Emerson, and Carlyle. After leaving college he did not, like his contemporaries, enter a profession. With his beloved brother John, who died in 1842, he taught school in Concord for a

1817-1862-----HENRY DAVID THOREAU

time, but he did not wish to be tied down to any one occupation indefinitely. Since his writing brought him little money, he resorted to surveying, to odd jobs, or to the family trade of pencil-making as a means of supporting himself.

It was not until about 1840 that he definitely made up his mind to become a writer. He had come meanwhile under the influence of Emerson, whose *Nature* (1836) made a deep impression on him. For a time he lived with the Emersons. At one time he is said to have imitated even Emerson's manner of speech as well as his way of writing. In later years he seems to have drawn somewhat away from Emerson. He was not at all the second-rate Emerson that Lowell thought him. Thoreau was active in certain Transcendental undertakings. He contributed to the *Dial* and assisted Emerson with the editing of it.

His method of writing resembles Emerson's in that most of his writings are drawn from his journals. During his lifetime he published only two books. The first of these, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849), made little impression. Of the edition of one thousand copies printed at the author's own risk, 75 were given away while Munroe the publisher sold 219 and returned to the author the remaining 706. Thoreau's best known work, *Walden*, was published in 1854. Had the book been first published thirty years later, it might have enjoyed the success that attended the nature books of John Burroughs and John Muir. *Walden* is the first and best example, however, of that distinctively American literary type, the "nature book." The bulk of Thoreau's writing was not published until after his death from tuberculosis on May 6, 1862. During his lifetime, however, Thoreau had published several notable articles and addresses in the magazines. Perhaps the most remarkable of these is his "Civil Disobedience." Although not an active reformer, Thoreau was on occasion one of the most outspoken of Abolitionists. In 1845, following the example of Bronson Alcott, he refused to pay a poll tax to a government which permitted slavery to exist, and spent a night in Concord jail. He was released when members of the family paid the tax.

Thoreau's reputation and influence have grown slowly but steadily since his death. Even yet, however, he suffers from two misconceptions: that he was a mere disciple of Emerson and that he was primarily a naturalist in any scientific sense. He once wrote in his journal: "Man cannot afford to be a naturalist, to look at Nature directly, but only with the side of his eye. He must look through and beyond her." He was one of the most original thinkers and one of the best prose writers of his time.

Most significant of his ideas, from the point of view of the twentieth century, is his attitude toward the growing industrial civilization of the United States. Many new inventions struck him as "improved means to an unimproved end." In the *Democratic Review* for November, 1843, he wrote:

"How little do the most wonderful inventions of modern times detain us. They insult nature. Every machine, or particular application, seems a slight outrage against universal laws. How many fine inventions are there which do not clutter the ground? We think that those only succeed which minister to our sensible and animal wants, which bake or brew, wash or warm, or the like. But are those of no account which are patented by fancy and imagination, and succeed so admirably in our dreams that they give the tone still to our waking thoughts?"

The standard editions of Thoreau's works are the *Riverside* (1894) and the *Walden* (1906). Carl Bode has edited Thoreau's *Collected Poems* (1943) in both popular and critical editions.

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The best biography is by Henry Seidel Canby (1939), but Frank B. Sanborn's biography (1917) still has some value. Odell Shepard's *The Heart of Thoreau's Journals* (1927) is a suitable companion to Bliss Perry's *The Heart of Emerson's Journals* (1926). Excellent criticism is found in F. O. Matthiessen, *American Renaissance* (1941); Mark Van Doren, *Henry David Thoreau* (1916); and George F. Whicher, *Walden Revisited* (1945). Robert Louis Stevenson has an essay on Thoreau in *Familiar Studies of Men and Books* (1882). James Russell Lowell's essay is more brilliant than enlightening, but Emerson's "Thoreau" is a penetrating interpretation. For Thoreau's classical background, see Clarence Gohdes, "Henry Thoreau, Bachelor of Arts," *Classical Journal*, XXIII, 323-336 (February, 1928). Bartholow V. Crawford's *Henry David Thoreau: Representative Selections* (1934), in the American Writers Series, has a good working bibliography and a useful introductory essay. Further references are given in Lewis Leary (ed.), *Articles on American Literature . . .* (1947).

CRITICAL COMMENTS

. . . He had "fine translunary things" in him. His better style as a writer is in keeping with the simplicity and purity of his life. We have said that his range was narrow, but to be a master is to be a master. He had caught his English at its living source, among the poets and prose-writers of its best days; his literature was extensive and erudite; his quotations are always nuggets of the purest ore: there are sentences of his as perfect as anything in the language, and thoughts as clearly crystallized; his metaphors and images are always fresh from the soil; he had watched Nature like a detective who is to go upon the stand; as we read him, it seems as if all-out-of-doors had kept a diary and become its own Claude Lorraine glass; compared with his, all other books of similar aim, even White's *Selborne*, seem dry as a country clergyman's meteorological journal in an old almanac (James Russell Lowell, "Thoreau," 1865).

Upon me this pure, narrow, sunnily-ascetic Thoreau had exercised a great charm. I have scarce written ten sentences since I was introduced to him, but his influence might be somewhere detected by a close observer (Robert Louis Stevenson, Preface to *Familiar Studies of Men and Books*, 1882).

He was intellectually one of the bravest men that ever lived, and also a clammy prig. He was a prose-stylist of singular and signal excellence and left no complete book behind him (Ludwig Lewisohn, *Expression in America*, 1932, p. 136).

LETTERS*

TO HORACE GREELEY (AT NEW YORK)

CONCORD, May 19, 1848.

MY FRIEND GREELEY,—I have to-day received from you fifty dollars. It is five years that I have

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been maintaining myself entirely by manual labor,—not getting a cent from any other quarter or employment. Now this toil has occupied so few days,—perhaps a single month, spring and fall each,—that I must have had more leisure than any of my brethren for study and literature. I have done rude work of all kinds. From July, 1845, to September, 1847, I lived by myself in the forest, in a fairly good cabin, plastered and warmly covered, which I built myself.

There I earned all I needed and kept to my own affairs. During that time my weekly outlay was but seven-and-twenty cents; and I had an abundance of all sorts. Unless the human race perspire more than I do, there is no occasion to live by the sweat of their brow. If men cannot get on without money (the smallest amount will suffice), the truest method of earning it is by working as a laborer at one dollar per day. You are at least dependent so; I speak as an expert, having used several kinds of labor.

Why should the scholar make a constant complaint that his fate is specially hard? We are too often told of "the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties,"—how poets depend on patrons and starve in garrets, or at last go mad and die. Let us hear the other side of the story. Why should not the scholar, if he is really wiser than the multitude, do coarse work now and then? Why not let his greater wisdom enable him to do without things? If you say the wise man is unlucky, how could you distinguish him from the foolishly unfortunate? - - -

TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER)

CONCORD, *November 16, 1857.*

MR. BLAKE,—You have got the start again. It was I that owed you a letter or two, if I mistake not.

They make a great ado nowadays about hard times;¹ but I think that the community generally, ministers and all, take a wrong view of the matter, though some of the ministers preaching according to a formula may pretend to take a right one. This general failure, both private and public, is rather occasion for rejoicing, as reminding us whom we have at our helm,—that justice is always done. If our merchants did not most of them fail, and the banks too, my faith in the old laws of the world would be staggered. The statement that ninety-six in a hundred doing such business surely break down is perhaps the sweetest fact that statistics have revealed,—exhilarating as the fragrance ofallows in spring. Does it not say somewhere, "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice"? If thousands are thrown out of employment, it sug-

¹ Thoreau refers to the panic, or depression, of 1857.

gests that they were not well employed. Why don't they take the hint? It is not enough to be industrious; so are the ants. What are you industrious about?

5 The merchants and company have long laughed at transcendentalism, higher laws, etc., crying, "None of your moonshine," as if they were anchored to something not only definite, but sure and permanent. If there was any institution which was presumed to rest on a solid and secure basis, and more than any other represented this boasted common sense, prudence, and practical talent, it was the bank; and now those very banks are found to be mere reeds shaken by the wind. Scarcely one in the land has kept its promise. It would seem as if you only need live forty years in any age of the world, to see its most promising government become the government of Kansas, and banks nowhere. Not merely the Brook Farm and Fourierite communities, but now the community generally has failed. But there is the moonshine still, serene, beneficent, and unchanged. Hard times, I say, have this value, among others, that they show us what such promises are worth,—where the *sure* banks are. I heard some merchant praised the other day because he had paid some of his debts, though it took nearly all he had (why, I've done as much as that myself many times, and a little more), and then gone to board. What if he has? I hope he's got a good boarding-place, and can pay for it. It's not everybody that can. However, in my opinion, it is cheaper to keep house,—i.e., if you don't keep too big a one.

Men will tell you sometimes that "money's hard." That shows it was not made to eat, I say. Only think of a man in this new world, in his log cabin, in the midst of a corn and potato patch, with a sheepfold on one side, talking about money being hard! So are flints hard; there is no alloy in them. What has that to do with his raising his food, cutting his wood (or breaking it), keeping in-doors when it rains, and, if need be, spinning and weaving his clothes? Some of those who sank with the steamer the other day found out that money was *heavy* too. Think of a man's priding himself on this kind of wealth, as if it greatly enriched him. As if one struggling in mid-ocean with a bag of gold on his back should gasp out, "I am worth a hundred thousand dollars." I see them struggling

just as ineffectually on dry land, nay, even more hopelessly, for, in the former case, rather than sink, they will finally let the bag go; but in the latter they are pretty sure to hold and go down with it I see them swimming about in their great-coats, collecting their rents, really *getting their dues*, drinking bitter draughts which only increase their thirst, becoming more and more water-logged, till finally they sink plumb down to the bottom. But enough of this.

Have you ever read Ruskin's books? If not, I would recommend you to try the second and third volumes (not parts) of his "Modern Painters." I am now reading the fourth, and have read most of his other books lately. They are singularly good and encouraging, though not without crudeness and bigotry. The themes in the volumes referred to are Infinity, Beauty, Imagination, Love of Nature, etc.,—all treated in a very living manner. I am rather surprised by them. It is remarkable that these things should be said with reference to painting chiefly, rather than literature. The "Seven Lamps of Architecture," too, is made of good stuff; but, as I remember, there is too much about art in it for me and the Hottentots. We want to know about matters and things in general. Our house is as yet a hut.

You must have been enriched by your solitary walk over the mountains. I suppose that I feel the same awe when on their summits that many do on entering a church. To see what kind of earth that is on which you have a house and garden somewhere, perchance! It is equal to the lapse of many years. You must ascend a mountain to learn your relation to matter, and so to your own body, for *it* is at home there, though *you* are not. It might have been composed there, and will have no farther to go to return to dust there, than in your garden; but your spirit inevitably comes away, and brings your body with it, if it lives. Just as awful really, and as glorious, is your garden. See how I can play with my fingers! They are the funniest companions I have ever found! Where did they come from? What strange control I have over them! *Who* am I? What are they?—those little peaks—call them Madison, Jefferson, Lafayette. What is *the matter?* My fingers ten, I say. Why, erelong, they may form the topmost crystal of Mount Washington. I go up there to see my body's cousins. There are some fingers, toes, bowels, etc., that I

take an interest in, and therefore I am interested in all their relations.

Let me suggest a theme for you: to state to yourself precisely and completely what that walk over the mountains amounted to for you,—returning to this essay again and again, until you are satisfied that all that was important in your experience is in it. Give this good reason to yourself for having gone over the mountains, for mankind is ever going over a mountain. Don't suppose that you can tell it precisely the first dozen times you try, but at 'em again, especially when, after a sufficient pause, you suspect that you are touching the heart or summit of the matter, reiterate your blows there, and account for the mountain to yourself. Not that the story need be long, but it will take a long while to make it short. It did not take very long to get over the mountain, you thought; but have you got over it indeed? If you have been to the top of Mount Washington, let me ask, what did you find there? That is the way they prove witnesses, you know. Going up there and being blown on is nothing. We never do much climbing while we are there, but we eat our luncheon, etc., very much as at home. It is after we get home that we really go over the mountain, if ever. What did the mountain say? What did the mountain do?

I keep a mountain anchored off eastward a little way, which I ascend in my dreams both awake and asleep. Its broad base spreads over a village or two, which do not know it; neither does it know them, nor do I when I ascend it. I can see its general outline as plainly now in my mind as that of Wachusett. I do not invent in the least, but state exactly what I see. I find that I go up it when I am light-footed and earnest. It ever smokes like an altar with its sacrifice. I am not aware that a single villager frequents it or knows of it. I keep this mountain to ride instead of a horse.

Do you not mistake about seeing Moosehead Lake from Mount Washington? That must be about one hundred and twenty miles distant, or nearly twice as far as the Atlantic, which last some doubt if they can see thence. Was it not Umbagog?

Dr. Solger has been lecturing in the vestry in this town on Geography, to Sanborn's scholars, for several months past, at five P.M. Emerson and Alcott have been to hear him. I

was surprised when the former asked me, the other day, if I was not going to hear Dr. Solger. What, to be sitting in a meeting-house cellar at that time of day, when you might possibly be out-doors! I never thought of such a thing. What was the sun made for? If he does not prize day-light, I do. Let him lecture to owls and dormice. He must be a wonderful lecturer indeed who can keep me indoors at such an hour, when the night is coming in which no man can work.

Are you in want of amusement nowadays? Then play a little at the game of getting a living. There never was anything equal to it. Do it temperately, though, and don't sweat. Don't let this secret out, for I have a design against the Opera. OPERA!! Pass along the exclamations, devil.²

Now is the time to become conversant with your wood-pile (this comes under Work for the Month), and be sure you put some warmth into it by your mode of getting it. Do not consent to be passively warmed. An intense degree of that is the hotness that is threatened. But a positive warmth within can withstand the fiery furnace, as the vital heat of a living man can withstand the heat that cooks meat.

TO MYRON B. BENTON (AT
LEEDSVILLE, N. Y.)

CONCORD, *March 21, 1862.*

DEAR SIR,—I thank you for your very kind letter, which, ever since I received it, I have intended to answer before I died, however briefly. I am encouraged to know, that, so far as you are concerned, I have not written my books in vain. I was particularly gratified, some years ago, when one of my friends and neighbors said, "I wish you would write another book,—write it for me." He is actually more familiar with what I have written than I am myself.

The verses you refer to in Conway's "Dial," were written by F. B. Sanborn of this town. I never wrote for that journal.

I am pleased when you say that in "The Week" you liked especially "those little snatches of poetry interspersed through the book," for these, I suppose, are the least attractive to most readers. I have not been engaged in any par-

² Printer's devil, pass along the exclamation points.

ticular work on Botany, or the like, though, if I were to live, I should have much to report on Natural History generally.

You ask particularly after my health. I *suppose* that I have not many months to live, but, of course, I know nothing about it. I may add that I am enjoying existence as much as ever, and regret nothing.

Yours truly,

HENRY D. THOREAU,
by SOPHIA E. THOREAU.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

(May, 1849)

This essay, after Thoreau had used it as a lecture, was published in Elizabeth Peabody's short-lived magazine, *Aesthetic Papers*, in May, 1849, under the title "Resistance to Civil Government." Thoreau's antipathy to slavery and his dislike of the War with Mexico led him to take a more extreme position than he otherwise would have taken. Like Bronson Alcott before him, he refused to pay his poll-tax to a state that he thought endorsed such things. He was arrested while living at Walden Pond and spent one night in jail. (See *Walden* for another account of the episode.) The view of government presented in the essay is that of the extreme individualist. "The only government that I recognize," he said, "—and it matters not how few are at the head of it, or how small its army—is that power that establishes justice in the land, never that which establishes injustice." It would hardly be possible to establish a state on Thoreau's philosophy of government. If the individual is to be the sole judge of his duties to the state, how is one to discriminate between anarchy and justifiable opposition to the rulers of the state? Thoreau's views, as George F. Whicher puts it, "are not reconcilable with Socialism, Communism, or any modern program for the conversion of society to a classless basis through the domination of a class. They do not contemplate the fusion of individuals into masses, nor the hammering of masses into pressure-groups and parties." The essay is said to have furnished Mahatma Gandhi the idea of his program of passive resistance to the British government in India. Thoreau, as his reaction to the Civil War indicates, was not a pacifist. The essay is ably discussed in Henry Seidel Canby's *Thoreau* (1939), pp. 231-238, and George F. Whicher's *Walden Revisited* (1945), Chapter 8. See also Raymond Adams, "Thoreau's Sources for 'Resistance to Civil Government,'" *Studies in Philology*, XLII, 640-653 (July, 1945).

I heartily accept the motto,—“That government is best which governs least”;¹ and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe,—“That government is best which governs not at all”; and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have. Government is at best but an expedient; but most governments are usually, and all governments are sometimes, inexpedient. The objections which have been brought against a standing army, and they are many and weighty, and deserve to prevail, may also at last be brought against a standing government. The standing army is only an arm of the standing government. The government itself, which is only the mode which the people have chosen to execute their will, is equally liable to be abused and perverted before the people can act through it. Witness the present Mexican war, the work of comparatively a few individuals using the standing government as their tool; for, in the outset, the people would not have consented to this measure.

This American government,—what is it but a tradition, though a recent one, endeavoring to transmit itself unimpaired to posterity, but each instant losing some of its integrity? It has not the vitality and force of a single living man; for a single man can bend it to his will. It is a sort of wooden gun to the people themselves. But it is not the less necessary for this; for the people must have some complicated machinery or other, and hear its din, to satisfy that idea of government which they have. Governments show thus how successfully men can be imposed on, even impose on themselves, for their own advantage. It is excellent, we must all allow. Yet this government never of itself furthered any enterprise, but by the alacrity with which it got out of its way. *It* does not keep the country free. *It* does not settle the West. *It* does not educate. The character inherent in the American people has done all that has been accomplished; and it would have done somewhat more, if the government had not sometimes got in its way. For government is an expedient by which men would fain succeed in letting one another alone; and, as has been said, when it is most

expedient, the governed are most let alone by it. Trade and commerce, if they were not made of India-rubber, would never manage to bounce over the obstacles which legislators are continually putting in their way; and, if one were to judge these men wholly by the effects of their actions and not partly by their intentions, they would deserve to be classed and punished with those mischievous persons who put obstructions on the railroads

But, to speak practically and as a citizen, unlike those who call themselves no-government men, I ask for, not at once no government, but *at once* a better government. Let every man make known what kind of government would command his respect, and that will be one step toward obtaining it.

After all, the practical reason why, when the power is once in the hands of the people, a majority are permitted, and for a long period continue, to rule is not because they are most likely to be in the right, nor because this seems fairest to the minority, but because they are physically the strongest. But a government in which the majority rule in all cases cannot be based on justice, even as far as men understand it. Can there not be a government in which majorities do not virtually decide right and wrong, but conscience?—in which majorities decide only those questions to which the rule of expediency is applicable? Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience, then? I think that we should be men first, and subjects afterward. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right. The only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right. It is truly enough said, that a corporation has no conscience; but a corporation of conscientious men is a corporation *with* a conscience. Law never made men a whit more just; and, by means of their respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice. A common and natural result of an undue respect for law is, that you may see a file of soldiers, colonel, captain, corporal, privates, powder-monkeys, and all, marching in admirable order over hill and dale to the wars, against their wills, ay, against their common sense and consciences, which makes it very steep marching indeed, and produces a palpitation of the heart.

¹ Cf. Emerson's essay on "Politics," published in 1844: "Hence the less government we have the better,—the fewer laws, and the less confided power."

They have no doubt that it is a damnable business in which they are concerned, they are all peaceably inclined. Now, what are they? Men at all? or small movable forts and magazines, at the service of some unscrupulous man in power? Visit the Navy-Yard, and behold a marine, such a man as an American government can make, or such as it can make a man with its black arts,—a mere shadow and reminiscence of humanity, a man laid out alive and standing, and already, as one may say, buried under arms with funeral accompaniments, though it may be,—

*"Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried."*

The mass of men serve the state thus, not as men mainly, but as machines, with their bodies. They are the standing army, and the militia, jailers, constables, posse comitatus, etc. In most cases there is no free exercise whatever of the judgment or of the moral sense; but they put themselves on a level with wood and earth and stones; and wooden men can perhaps be manufactured that will serve the purpose as well. Such command no more respect than men of straw or a lump of dirt. They have the some sort of worth only as horses and dogs. Yet such as these even are commonly esteemed good citizens. Others—as most legislators, politicians, lawyers, ministers, and office-holders—serve the state chiefly with their heads; and, as they rarely make any moral distinctions, they are as likely to serve the devil, without *intending* it, as God. A very few,—as heroes, patriots, martyrs, reformers in the great sense, and *men*—serve the state with their consciences also, and so necessarily resist it for the most part; and they are commonly treated as enemies by it. A wise man will only be useful as a man, and will not submit to be "clay," and "stop a hole to keep the wind away," but leave that office to his dust at least:—

*"I am too high-born to be propertied,
To be a secondary at control,
Or useful serving-man and instrument
To any sovereign state throughout the world."*

He who gives himself entirely to his fellow-men appears to them useless and selfish; but he who gives himself partially to them is pronounced a benefactor and philanthropist.

How does it become a man to behave toward

this American government to-day? I answer, that he cannot without disgrace be associated with it. I cannot for an instant recognize that political organization as *my* government which is the *slave's* government also.

All men recognize the right of revolution; that is, the right to refuse allegiance to, and to resist, the government, when its tyranny or its inefficiency are great and unendurable. But almost all say that such is not the case now. But such was the case, they think, in the Revolution of '75. If one were to tell me that this was a bad government because it taxed certain foreign commodities brought to its ports, it is most probable that I should not make an ado about it, for I can do without them. All machines have their friction; and possibly this does enough good to counterbalance the evil. At any rate, it is a great evil to make a stir about it. But when the friction comes to have its machine, and oppression and robbery are organized, I say, let us not have such a machine any longer. In other words, when a sixth of the population of a nation which has undertaken to be the refuge of liberty are slaves, and a whole country is unjustly overrun and conquered by a foreign army, and subjected to military law, I think that it is not too soon for honest men to rebel and revolutionize. What makes this duty the more urgent is the fact that the country so overrun is not our own, but ours is the invading army.

Paley,² a common authority with many on moral questions, in his chapter on the "Duty of Submission to Civil Government," resolves all civil obligation into expediency; and he proceeds to say, "that so long as the interest of the whole society requires it, that is, so long as the established government cannot be resisted or changed without public inconvenience, it is the will of God that the established government be obeyed, and no longer. . . . This principle being admitted, the justice of every particular case of resistance is reduced to a computation of the quantity of the danger and grievance on the one side, and of the probability and expense of redressing it on the other." Of this, he says, every man shall judge for himself. But Paley appears never to have contemplated those cases to which the rule of expediency does not apply,

² William Paley (1743-1805), author of the widely read *Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy*, first published in 1785.

in which a people, as well as an individual, must do justice, cost what it may. If I have unjustly wrested a plank from a drowning man, I must restore it to him though I drown myself. This, according to Paley, would be inconvenient. But he that would save his life, in such a case, shall lose it. This people must cease to hold slaves, and to make war on Mexico, though it cost them their existence as a people.

In their practice, nations agree with Paley; but does any one think that Massachusetts does exactly what is right at the present crisis?

*"A dyab of state, a cloth-o'-silver slut,
To have her tram borne up, and her soul trail in
the dirt."*

Practically speaking, the opponents to a reform in Massachusetts are not a hundred thousand politicians at the South, but a hundred thousand merchants and farmers here, who are more interested in commerce and agriculture than they are in humanity, and are not prepared to do justice to the slave and to Mexico, *cost what it may*. I quarrel not with far-off foes, but with those who, near at home, cooperate with, and do the bidding of, those far away, and without whom the latter would be harmless. We are accustomed to say, that the mass of men are unprepared; but improvement is slow, because the few are not materially wiser or better than the many. It is not so important that many should be as good as you, as that there be some absolute goodness somewhere; for that will leaven the whole lump. There are thousands who are *in opinion* opposed to slavery and to the war, who yet in effect do nothing to put an end to them; who, esteeming themselves children of Washington and Franklin, sit down with their hands in their pockets, and say that they know not what to do, and do nothing; who even postpone the question of freedom to the question of free-trade, and quietly read the price-current along with the latest advices from Mexico, after dinner, and, it may be, fall asleep over them both. What is the price-current of an honest man and patriot to-day? They hesitate, and they regret, and sometimes they petition; but they do nothing in earnest and with effect. They will wait, well disposed, for others to remedy the evil, that they may no longer have it to regret. At most, they give only a cheap vote, and a feeble countenance and God-speed, to the

right, as it goes by them. There are nine hundred and ninety-nine patrons of virtue to one virtuous man. But it is easier to deal with the real possessor of a thing than with the temporary guardian of it.

All voting is a sort of gaming, like checkers or backgammon, with a slight moral tinge to it, a playing with right and wrong, with moral questions, and betting naturally accompanies it. The character of the voters is not staked. I cast my vote, perchance, as I think right; but I am not vitally concerned that that right should prevail. I am willing to leave it to the majority. Its obligation, therefore, never exceeds that of expediency. Even voting *for the right* is doing nothing for it. It is only expressing to men feebly your desire that it should prevail. A wise man will not leave the right to the mercy of chance, nor wish it to prevail through the power of the majority. There is but little virtue in the action of masses of men. When the majority shall at length vote for the abolition of slavery, it will be because they are indifferent to slavery, or because there is but little slavery left to be abolished by their vote. *They* will then be the only slaves. Only *his* vote can hasten the abolition of slavery who asserts his own freedom by his vote.

I hear of a convention to be held at Baltimore, or elsewhere, for the selection of a candidate for the Presidency, made up chiefly of editors, and men who are politicians by profession; but I think, what is it to any independent, intelligent, and respectable man what decision they may come to. Shall we not have the advantage of his wisdom and honesty, nevertheless? Can we not count upon some independent votes? Are there not many individuals in the country who do not attend conventions? But no: I find that the respectable man, so called, has immediately drifted from his position, and despairs of his country, when his country has more reason to despair of him. He forthwith adopts one of the candidates thus selected as the only *available* one, thus proving that he is himself *available* for any purposes of the demagogue. His vote is of no more worth than that of any unprincipled foreigner or hireling native, who may have been bought. O for a man who is a *man*, and, as my neighbor says, has a bone in his back which you cannot pass your hand through! Our statistics are at fault: the popula-

tion has been returned too large. How many *men* are there to a square thousand miles in this country? Hardly one. Does not America offer any inducement for men to settle here? The American has dwindled into an Odd Fellow,—one who may be known by the development of his organ of gregariousness, and a manifest lack of intellect and cheerful self-reliance; whose first and chief concern, on coming into the world, is to see that the Almshouses are in good repair; and, before yet he has lawfully donned the virile garb, to collect a fund for the support of the widows and orphans that may be; who, in short, ventures to live only by the aid of the Mutual Insurance company, which has promised to bury him decently.

It is not a man's duty, as a matter of course, to devote himself to the eradication of any, even the most enormous wrong, he may still properly have other concerns to engage him; but it is his duty, at least, to wash his hands of it, and, if he gives it no thought longer, not to give it practically his support. If I devote myself to other pursuits and contemplations, I must first see, at least, that I do not pursue them sitting upon another man's shoulders. I must get off him first, that he may pursue his contemplations too. See what gross inconsistency is tolerated. I have heard some of my townsmen say, "I should like to have them order me out to help put down an insurrection of the slaves, or to march to Mexico,—see if I would go"; and yet these very men have each, directly by their allegiance, and so indirectly, at least, by their money, furnished a substitute. The soldier is applauded who refuses to serve in an unjust war by those who do not refuse to sustain the unjust government which makes the war; is applauded by those whose own act and authority he disregards and sets at naught; as if the State were penitent to that degree that it hired one to scourge it while it sinned, but not to that degree that it left off sinning for a moment. Thus, under the name of Order and Civil Government, we are all made at last to pay homage to and support our own meanness. After the first blush of sin, comes its indifference; and from immoral it becomes, as it were, *unmoral*, and not quite unnecessary to that life which we have made.

The broadest and most prevalent error requires the most disinterested virtue to sustain it. The slight reproach to which the virtue of

patriotism is commonly liable, the noble are most likely to incur. Those who, while they disapprove of the character and measures of a government, yield to it their allegiance and support are undoubtedly its most conscientious supporters, and so frequently the most serious obstacles to reform. Some are petitioning the State to dissolve the Union, to disregard the requisitions of the President. Why do they not dissolve it themselves,—the union between themselves and the State,—and refuse to pay their quota into its treasury? Do not they stand in the same relation to the State, that the State does to the Union? And have not the same reasons prevented the State from resisting the Union, which have prevented them from resisting the State?

How can a man be satisfied to entertain an opinion merely, and enjoy *it*? Is there any enjoyment in it, if his opinion is that he is aggrieved? If you are cheated out of a single dollar by your neighbor, you do not rest satisfied with knowing that you are cheated, or with saying that you are cheated, or even with petitioning him to pay you your due, but you take effectual steps at once to obtain the full amount, and see that you are never cheated again. Action from principle, the perception and the performance of right, changes things and relations; it is essentially revolutionary, and does not consist wholly with anything which was. It not only divides states and churches, it divides families; ay, it divides the *individual*, separating the diabolical in him from the divine.

Unjust laws exist: shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavor to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once? Men generally, under such a government as this, think that they ought to wait until they have persuaded the majority to alter them. They think that, if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy is worse than the evil. *It* makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform? Why does it not cherish its wise minority? Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults, and *do* better than it would have them? Why does it always crucify Christ, and excommunicate Copernicus and Luther, and pronounce Washington and Franklin rebels?

One would think, that a deliberate and practical denial of its authority was the only offense never contemplated by government; else, why has it not assigned its definite, its suitable and proportionate penalty? If a man who has no property refuses but once to earn nine shillings for the State, he is put in prison for a period unlimited by any law that I know, and determined only by the discretion of those who placed him there; but if he should steal ninety times nine shillings from the state, he is soon permitted to go at large again.

If the injustice is part of the necessary friction of the machine of government, let it go, let it go. perchance it will wear smooth,—certainly the machine will wear out. If the injustice has a spring, or a pulley, or a rope, or a crank, exclusively for itself, then perhaps you may consider whether the remedy will not be worse than the evil; but if it is of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another, then, I say, break the law. Let your life be a counter friction to stop the machine. What I have to do is to see, at any rate, that I do not lend myself to the wrong which I condemn.

As for adopting the ways which the State has provided for remedying the evil, I know not of such ways. They take too much time, and a man's life will be gone. I have other affairs to attend to. I came into this world, not chiefly to make this a good place to live in, but to live in it, be it good or bad. A man has not everything to do, but something; and because he cannot do *everything*, it is not necessary that he should do *something* wrong. It is not my business to be petitioning the Governor or the Legislature any more than it is theirs to petition me; and if they should not hear my petition, what should I do then? But in this case the State has provided no way: its very Constitution is the evil. This may seem to be harsh and stubborn and unconciliatory; but it is to treat with the utmost kindness and consideration the only spirit that can appreciate or deserves it. So is all change for the better, like birth and death, which convulse the body.

I do not hesitate to say, that those who call themselves Abolitionists should at once effectually withdraw their support, both in person and property, from the government of Massachusetts, and not wait till they constitute a majority of one, before they suffer the right to prevail

through them. I think that it is enough if they have God on their side, without waiting for that other one. Moreover, any man more right than his neighbors constitutes a majority of one already.

I meet this American government, or its representative, the State government, directly, and face to face, once a year—no more—in the person of its tax-gatherer, this is the only mode in which a man situated as I am necessarily meets it; and it then says distinctly, Recognize me; and the simplest, the most effectual, and, in the present posture of affairs, the indispensablest mode of treating with it on this head, of expressing your little satisfaction with and love for it, is to deny it then. My civil neighbor, the tax-gatherer, is the very man I have to deal with,—for it is, after all, with men and not with parchment that I quarrel,—and he has voluntarily chosen to be an agent of the government. How shall he ever know well what he is and does as an officer of the government, or as a man, until he is obliged to consider whether he shall treat me, his neighbor, for whom he has respect, as a neighbor and well-disposed man, or as a maniac and disturber of the peace, and see if he can get over this obstruction to his neighborliness without a ruder and more impetuous thought or speech corresponding with his action. I know this well, that if one thousand, if one hundred, if ten men whom I could name,—if ten *honest* men only,—ay, if *one* HONEST man, in this State of Massachusetts, *ceasing to hold slaves*, were actually to withdraw from this copartnership, and be locked up in the county jail therefor, it would be the abolition of slavery in America. For it matters not how small the beginning may seem to be: what is once well done is done forever. But we love better to talk about it: that we say is our mission. Reform keeps many scores of newspapers in its service, but not one man. If my esteemed neighbor, the State's ambassador,³ who will devote his days to the settlement of the question of human rights in the Council Chamber, instead of being threatened with the prisons of Carolina, were to sit down the prisoner of Massachusetts, that State which is so anxious to foist the sin of slavery upon her sister,—though at present she can discover only an act of in-

³ Samuel Hoare, of Concord, who had been sent to Charleston to protest against the imprisonment of free Negro seamen from Massachusetts.

hospitality to be the ground of a quarrel with her,—the Legislature would not wholly waive the subject the following winter.

Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison. The proper place to-day, the only place which Massachusetts has provided for her freer and less desponding spirits, is in her prisons, to be put out and locked out of the State by her own act, as they have already put themselves out by their principles. It is there that the fugitive slave, and the Mexican prisoner on parole, and the Indian come to plead the wrongs of his race should find them, on that separate, but more free and honorable ground, where the State places those who are not *with* her but *against* her,—the only house in a slave State in which a free man can abide with honor. If any think that their influence would be lost there, and their voices no longer afflict the ear of the State, that they would not be as an enemy within its walls, they do not know by how much truth is stronger than error, nor how much more eloquently and effectively he can combat injustice who has experienced a little in his own person. Cast your whole vote, not a strip of paper merely, but your whole influence. A minority is powerless while it conforms to the majority; it is not even a minority then; but it is irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight. If the alternative is to keep all just men in prison, or give up war and slavery, the State will not hesitate which to choose. If a thousand men were not to pay their tax-bills this year, that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood. This is, in fact, the definition of a peaceable revolution if any such is possible. If the tax-gatherer, or any other public officer, asks me, as one has done, "But what shall I do?" my answer is, "If you really wish to do anything, resign your office." When the subject has refused allegiance, and the officer has resigned his office, then the revolution is accomplished. But even suppose blood should flow. Is there not a sort of blood shed when the conscience is wounded? Through this wound a man's real manhood and immortality flow out, and he bleeds to an everlasting death. I see this blood flowing now.

I have contemplated the imprisonment of the offender, rather than the seizure of his goods,—

though both will serve the same purpose,—because they who assert the purest right, and consequently are most dangerous to a corrupt State, commonly have not spent much time in accumulating property. To such the State renders comparatively small service, and a slight tax is wont to appear exorbitant, particularly if they are obliged to earn it by special labor with their hands. If there were one who lived wholly without the use of money, the State itself would hesitate to demand it of him. But the rich man—not to make any invidious comparison—is always sold to the institution which makes him rich. Absolutely speaking, the more money, the less virtue; for money comes between a man and his objects, and obtains them for him; and it was certainly no great virtue to obtain it. It puts to rest many questions which he would otherwise be taxed to answer; while the only new question which it puts is the hard but superfluous one, how to spend it. Thus his moral ground is taken from under his feet. The opportunities of living are diminished in proportion as what are called the "means" are increased. The best thing a man can do for his culture when he is rich is to endeavour to carry out those schemes which he entertained when he was poor. Christ answered the Herodians according to their condition. "Show me the tribute-money," said he;—and one took a penny out of his pocket;—If you use money which has the image of Cæsar on it, and which he has made current and valuable, that is, *if you are men of the State*, and gladly enjoy the advantages of Cæsar's government, then pay him back some of his own when he demands it; "Render therefore to Cæsar that which is Cæsar's, and to God those things which are God's,"—leaving them no wiser than before as to which was which; for they did not wish to know.

When I converse with the freest of my neighbors, I perceive that, whatever they may say about the magnitude and seriousness of the question, and their regard for the public tranquillity, the long and the short of the matter is, that they cannot spare the protection of the existing government, and they dread the consequences to their property and families of disobedience to it. For my own part, I should not like to think that I ever rely on the protection of the State. But, if I deny the authority of the State when it presents its tax-bill, it will soon take and waste all my property, and so harass

me and my children without end. This is hard. This makes it impossible for a man to live honestly, and at the same time comfortably, in outward respects. It will not be worth the while to accumulate property; that would be sure to go again. You must hire or squat somewhere, and raise but a small crop, and eat that soon. You must live within yourself, and depend upon yourself always tucked up and ready for a start, and not have many affairs. A man may grow rich in Turkey even, if he will be in all respects a good subject of the Turkish government. Confucius said: "If a state is governed by the principles of reason, poverty and misery are subjects of shame; if a state is not governed by the principles of reason, riches and honors are the subjects of shame." No: until I want the protection of Massachusetts to be extended to me in some distant Southern port, where my liberty is endangered, or until I am bent solely on building up an estate at home by peaceful enterprise, I can afford to refuse allegiance to Massachusetts, and her right to my property and life. It costs me less in every sense to incur the penalty of disobedience to the State than it would to obey. I should feel as if I were worth less in that case.

Some years ago, the State met me in behalf of the Church, and commanded me to pay a certain sum toward the support of a clergyman whose preaching my father attended, but never I myself. "Pay," it said, "or be locked up in the jail." I declined to pay. But, unfortunately, another man saw fit to pay it. I did not see why the schoolmaster should be taxed to support the priest, and not the priest the schoolmaster; for I was not the State's schoolmaster, but I supported myself by voluntary subscription. I did not see why the lyceum should not present its tax-bill, and have the State to back its demand, as well as the Church. However, at the request of the selectmen, I condescended to make some such statement as this in writing:—"Know all men by these presents, that I, Henry Thoreau, do not wish to be regarded as a member of any incorporated society which I have not joined." This I gave to the town clerk; and he has it. The State, having thus learned that I did not wish to be regarded as a member of that church, has never made a like demand on me since; though it said that it must adhere to its original presumption that time. If I had known how to name them, I should then have signed off in de-

tail from all the societies which I never signed on to; but I did not know where to find a complete list.

I have paid no poll-tax for six years.⁴ I was put into a jail once on this account, for one night; and, as I stood considering the walls of solid stone, two or three feet thick, the door of wood and iron, a foot thick, and the iron grating which strained the light, I could not help being struck with the foolishness of that institution which treated me as if I were mere flesh and blood and bones, to be locked up. I wondered that it should have concluded at length that this was the best use it could put me to, and had never thought to avail itself of my services in some way. I saw that, if there was a wall of stone between me and my townsmen, there was a still more difficult one to climb or break through before they could get to be as free as I was. I did not for a moment feel confined, and the walls seemed a great waste of stone and mortar. I felt as if I alone of all my townsmen had paid my tax. They plainly did not know how to treat me, but behaved like persons who are underbred. In every threat and in every compliment there was a blunder; for they thought that my chief desire was to stand the other side of that stone wall. I could not but smile to see how industriously they locked the door on my meditations, which followed them out again without let or hindrance, and *they* were really all that was dangerous. As they could not reach me, they had resolved to punish my body; just as boys, if they cannot come at some person against whom they have a spite, will abuse his dog. I saw that the State was half-witted, that it was timid as a lone woman with her silver spoons, and that it did not know its friends from its foes, and I lost all my remaining respect for it, and pitied it.

Thus the State never intentionally confronts a man's sense, intellectual or moral, but only his body, his senses. It is not armed with superior wit or honesty, but with superior physical strength. I was not born to be forced. I will breathe after my own fashion. Let us see who is the strongest. What force has a multitude? They only can force me who obey a higher law than I. They force me to become like themselves. I do not hear of *men* being *forced* to live this way or

⁴ Thoreau, however, paid his poll-tax of \$1.50 in 1849, the year in which the essay was first published (Canby, *Thoreau*, p. 235).

that by masses of men. What sort of life were that to live? When I meet a government which says to me, "Your money or your life," why should I be in haste to give it my money? It may be in a great strait, and not know what to do. I cannot help that. It must help itself; do as I do. It is not worth the while to snivel about it. I am not responsible for the successful working of the machinery of society. I am not the son of the engineer. I perceive that, when an acorn and a chestnut fall side by side, the one does not remain inert to make way for the other, but both obey their own laws, and spring and grow and flourish as best they can, till one, perchance, overshadows and destroys the other. If a plant cannot live according to its nature, it dies; and so a man.

The night in prison was novel and interesting enough. The prisoners in their shirt-sleeves were enjoying a chat and the evening air in the doorway, when I entered. But the jailer said, "Come, boys, it is time to lock up"; and so they dispersed, and I heard the sound of their steps returning into the hollow apartments. My roommate was introduced to me by the jailer as "a first-rate fellow and a clever man." When the door was locked, he showed me where to hang my hat, and how he managed matters there. The rooms were whitewashed once a month; and this one, at least, was the whitest, most simply furnished, and probably the neatest apartment in the town. He naturally wanted to know where I came from, and what brought me there; and, when I had told him, I asked him in my turn how he came there, presuming him to be an honest man, of course; and, as the world goes, I believe he was. "Why," said he, "they accuse me of burning a barn; but I never did it." As near as I could discover, he had probably gone to bed in a barn when drunk, and smoked his pipe there; and so a barn was burnt. He had the reputation of being a clever man, had been there some three months waiting for his trial to come on, and would have to wait as much longer; but he was quite domesticated and contented, since he got his board for nothing, and thought that he was well treated.

He occupied one window, and I the other; and I saw that if one stayed there long, his principal business would be to look out the window. I had soon read all the tracts that were left there, and examined where former prisoners had broken out, and where a grate had been

sawed off, and heard the history of the various occupants of that room, for I found that even here there was a history and a gossip which never circulated beyond the walls of the jail. Probably this is the only house in the town where verses are composed, which are afterward printed in a circular form, but not published. I was shown quite a long list of verses which were composed by some young men who had been detected in an attempt to escape, who avenged themselves by singing them.

I pumped my fellow-prisoner as dry as I could, for fear I should never see him again; but at length he showed me which was my bed, and left me to blow out the lamp.

It was like traveling into a far country, such as I had never expected to behold, to lie there for one night. It seemed to me that I never had heard the town-clock strike before, nor the evening sounds of the village; for we slept with the windows open, which were inside the grating. It was to see my native village in the light of the Middle Ages, and our Concord was turned into a Rhine stream, and visions of knights and castles passed before me. They were the voices of old burghers that I heard in the streets. I was an involuntary spectator and auditor of whatever was done and said in the kitchen of the adjacent village-inn,—a wholly new and rare experience to me. It was a closer view of my native town. I was fairly inside of it. I never had seen its institutions before. This is one of its peculiar institutions; for it is a shire town.⁵ I began to comprehend what its inhabitants were about.

In the morning, our breakfasts were put through the hole in the door, in small oblong-square tin pans, made to fit, and holding a pint of chocolate, with brown bread, and an iron spoon. When they called for the vessels again, I was green enough to return what bread I had left; but my comrade seized it, and said that I should lay that up for lunch or dinner. Soon after he was let out to work at haying in a neighboring field, whither he went every day, and would not be back till noon; so he bade me good-day, saying that he doubted if he should see me again.

When I came out of prison,—for some one interfered, and paid that tax,⁶—I did not perceive

⁵ County seat.

⁶ The tax was paid by one of the Thoreau family and not by Emerson, as has been often stated.

that great changes had taken place on the common, such as he observed who went in a youth and emerged a tottering and gray-headed man; and yet a change had to my eyes come over the scene,—the town, and State, and country,—greater than any that mere time could effect. I saw yet more distinctly the State in which I lived. I saw to what extent the people among whom I lived could be trusted as good neighbors and friends; that their friendship was for summer weather only; that they did not greatly propose to do right, that they were a distinct race from me by their prejudices and superstitions, as the Chinamen and Malays are; that in their sacrifices to humanity they ran no risks, not even to their property; that after all they were not so noble but they treated the thief as he had treated them, and hoped, by a certain outward observance and a few prayers, and by walking in a particular straight though useless path from time to time, to save their souls. This may be to judge my neighbors harshly; for I believe that many of them are not aware that they have such an institution as the jail in their village.

It was formerly the custom in our village, when a poor debtor came out of jail, for his acquaintances to salute him, looking through their fingers, which were crossed to represent the grating of a jail window, "How do ye do?" My neighbors did not thus salute me, but first looked at me, and then at one another, as if I had returned from a long journey. I was put into jail as I was going to the shoemaker's to get a shoe which was mended. When I was let out the next morning, I proceeded to finish my errand, and, having put on my mended shoe, joined a huckleberry party, who were impatient to put themselves under my conduct; and in half an hour,—for the horse was soon tackled,—was in the midst of a huckleberry field, on one of our highest hills, two miles off, and then the State was nowhere to be seen.⁷

This is the whole history of "My Prisons."

I have never declined paying the highway tax, because I am as desirous of being a good neighbor as I am of being a bad subject; and as for

⁷ "[Julian Hawthorne] reports that Thoreau lost his temper when he was jailed. This seems to be true. Sam Staples, his jailor, interviewed many years later, said Henry 'was mad as the devil' when he turned him loose in the morning. Thoreau was a great rationalizer of his emotions when the time came to philosophize them!" (Canby, *Thoreau*, p. 233).

supporting schools, I am doing my part to educate my fellow-countrymen now. It is for no particular item in the tax-bill that I refuse to pay it. I simply wish to refuse allegiance to the State, to withdraw and stand aloof from it effectually. I do not care to trace the course of my dollar, if I could, till it buys a man or a musket to shoot one with,—the dollar is innocent,—but I am concerned to trace the effects of my allegiance. In fact, I quietly declare war with the State, after my fashion, though I will still make what use and get what advantage of her I can, as is usual in such cases.

If others pay the tax which is demanded of me, from a sympathy with the State, they do but what they have already done in their own case, or rather they abet injustice to a greater extent than the State requires. If they pay the tax from a mistaken interest in the individual taxed, to save his property, or prevent his going to jail, it is because they have not considered wisely how far they let their private feelings interfere with the public good.

This, then, is my position at present. But one cannot be too much on his guard in such a case, lest his action be biased by obstinacy, or an undue regard for the opinions of men. Let him see that he does only what belongs to himself and to the hour.

I think sometimes, Why, this people mean well, they are only ignorant; they would do better if they knew how: why give your neighbors this pain to treat you as they are not inclined to? But I think again, This is no reason why I should do as they do, or permit others to suffer much greater pain of a different kind. Again, I sometimes say to myself, When many millions of men, without heat, without ill will, without personal feeling of any kind, demand of you a few shillings only, without the possibility, such is their constitution, of retracting or altering their present demand, and without the possibility, on your side, of appeal to any other millions, why expose yourself to this overwhelming brute force? You do not resist cold and hunger, the winds and the waves, thus obstinately; you quietly submit to a thousand similar necessities. You do not put your head into the fire. But just in proportion as I regard this as not wholly a brute force, but partly a human force, and consider that I have relations to those millions as to so many millions of men, and not

of mere brute or inanimate things, I see that appeal is possible, first and instantaneously, from them to the Maker of them, and, secondly, from them to themselves. But, if I put my head deliberately into the fire, there is no appeal to fire or to the Maker of fire, and I have only myself to blame. If I could convince myself that I have any right to be satisfied with men as they are, and to treat them accordingly, and not according, in some respects, to my requisitions and expectations of what they and I ought to be, then, like a good Mussulman and fatalist, I should endeavor to be satisfied with things as they are, and say it is the will of God. And, above all, there is this difference between resisting this and a purely brute or natural force, that I can resist this with some effect; but I cannot expect, like Orpheus, to change the nature of the rocks and trees and beasts.

I do not wish to quarrel with any man or nation. I do not wish to split hairs, to make fine distinctions, or set myself up as better than my neighbors. I seek rather, I may say, even an excuse for conforming to the laws of the land. I am but too ready to conform to them. Indeed, I have reason to suspect myself on this head; and each year, as the tax-gatherer comes round, I find myself disposed to review the acts and position of the general and State governments, and the spirit of the people, to discover a pretext for conformity.

*"We must affect our country as our parents,
And if at any time we alienate
Our love or industry from doing it honor,
We must respect effects and teach the soul
Matter of conscience and religion,
And not desire rule or benefit."*

I believe that the State will soon be able to take all my work of this sort out of my hands, and then I shall be no better a patriot than my fellow-countrymen. Seen from a lower point of view, the Constitution, with all its faults, is very good; the law and the courts are very respectable; even this State and this American government are, in many respects, very admirable and rare things, to be thankful for, such as a great many have described them; but seen from a point of view a little higher, they are what I have described them; seen from a higher still, and the highest, who shall say what they are, or that they are worth looking at or thinking of at all?

However, the government does not concern me much, and I shall bestow the fewest possible thoughts on it. It is not many moments that I live under a government, even in this world. If a man is thought-free, fancy-free, imagination-free, that which *is not* never for a long time appearing *to be* to him, unwise rulers or reformers cannot fatally interrupt him.

I know that most men think differently from myself; but those whose lives are by profession devoted to the study of these or kindred subjects, content me as little as any. Statesmen and legislators, standing so completely within the institution, never distinctly and nakedly behold it. They speak of moving society, but have no resting-place without it. They may be men of a certain experience and discrimination, and have no doubt invented ingenious and even useful systems, for which we sincerely thank them; but all their wit and usefulness lie within certain not very wide limits. They are wont to forget that the world is not governed by policy and expediency. Webster never goes behind government, and so cannot speak with authority about it. His words are wisdom to those legislators who contemplate no essential reform in the existing government; but for thinkers, and those who legislate for all time, he never once glances at the subject. I know of those whose serene and wise speculations on this theme would soon reveal the limits of his mind's range and hospitality. Yet, compared with the cheap professions of most reformers, and the still cheaper wisdom and eloquence of politicians in general, his are almost the only sensible and valuable words, and we thank Heaven for him. Comparatively, he is always strong, original, and, above all, practical. Still his quality is not wisdom, but prudence. The lawyer's truth is not Truth, but consistency, or a consistent expediency. Truth is always in harmony with herself, and is not concerned chiefly to reveal the justice that may consist with wrong-doing. He well deserves to be called, as he has been called, the Defender of the Constitution. There are really no blows to be given by him but defensive ones. He is not a leader, but a follower. His leaders are the men of '87. "I have never made an effort," he says, "and never propose to make an effort; I have never countenanced an effort, and never mean to countenance an effort, to disturb the arrangement as originally made, by which the

various States came into the Union." Still thinking of the sanction which the Constitution gives to slavery, he says, "Because it was a part of the original compact,—let it stand."⁸ Notwithstanding his special acuteness and ability, he is unable to take a fact out of its merely political relations, and behold it as it lies absolutely to be disposed of by the intellect,—what, for instance, it behooves a man to do here in America to-day with regard to slavery, but ventures, or is driven, to make some such desperate answer as the following, while professing to speak absolutely, and as a private man,—from which what new and singular code of social duties might be inferred? —"The manner," says he, "in which the governments of those States where slavery exists are to regulate it is for their own consideration, under their responsibility to their constituents, to the general laws of propriety, humanity, and justice, and to God. Associations formed elsewhere, springing from a feeling of humanity, or any other cause, have nothing whatever to do with it. They have never received any encouragement from me, and they never will."⁹

They who know of no purer sources of truth, who have traced up its stream no higher, stand, and wisely stand, by the Bible and the Constitution, and drink at it there with reverence and humility; but they who behold where it comes trickling into this lake or that pool, gird up their loins once more, and continue their pilgrimage toward its fountain-head.

No man with a genius for legislation has appeared in America. They are rare in the history of the world. There are orators, politicians, and eloquent men, by the thousand; but the speaker has not yet opened his mouth to speak who is capable of settling the much-vexed questions of the day. We love eloquence for its own sake, and not for any truth which it may utter, or any heroism it may inspire. Our legislators have not yet learned the comparative value of free-trade and of freedom, of union, and of rectitude, to a nation. They have no genius or talent for comparatively humble questions of taxation and finance, commerce and manufactures and agriculture. If we were left solely to the wordy

wit of legislators in Congress for our guidance, uncorrected by the seasonable experience and the effectual complaints of the people, America would not long retain her rank among the nations. For eighteen hundred years, though perchance I have no right to say it, the New Testament has been written; yet where is the legislator who has wisdom and practical talent enough to avail himself of the light which it sheds on the science of legislation?

The authority of government, even such as I am willing to submit to,—for I will cheerfully obey those who know and can do better than I, and in many things even those who neither know nor can do so well,—is still an impure one: to be strictly just, it must have the sanction and consent of the governed. It can have no pure right over my person and property but what I concede to it. The progress from an absolute to a limited monarchy, from a limited monarchy to a democracy, is a progress toward a true respect for the individual. Even the Chinese philosopher was wise enough to regard the individual as the basis of the empire. Is a democracy, such as we know it, the last improvement possible in government? Is it not possible to take a step further towards recognizing and organizing the rights of man? There will never be a really free and enlightened State until the State comes to recognize the individual as a higher and independent power, from which all its own power and authority are derived, and treats him accordingly. I please myself with imagining a State at last which can afford to be just to all men, and to treat the individual with respect as a neighbor; which even would not think it inconsistent with its own repose if a few were to live aloof from it, not meddling with it, nor embraced by it, who fulfilled all the duties of neighbors and fellow-men. A State which bore this kind of fruit, and suffered it to drop off as fast as it ripened, would prepare the way for a still more perfect and glorious State, which also I have imagined, but not yet anywhere seen.

from WALDEN (1854)

"His [Thoreau's] aim was a noble and a useful one, in the direction of 'plain living and high thinking.' It was a practical sermon on Emerson's text that 'things are in the saddle and ride mankind,' an attempt to solve Carlyle's problem (condensed from

⁸ This and the preceding quotation are from Daniel Webster's speech on the Texas question, December 22, 1845.

⁹ From Webster's speech on a bill to exclude slavery from the territories, August 12, 1848.

Johnson) of 'lessening your denominator.' His whole life was a rebuke of the waste and aimlessness of our American luxury, which is an abject enslavement to tawdry upholstery" (Lowell, "Thoreau").

After reading *Walden*, Whittier wrote to James T. Fields:

"Thoreau's 'Walden' is capital reading, but very wicked and heathenish. The practical moral of it seems to be that if a man is willing to sink himself into a woodchuck he can live as cheaply as that quadruped, but after all, for me, I prefer walking on two legs."

I. ECONOMY

When I wrote the following pages, or rather the bulk of them, I lived alone, in the woods, a mile from any neighbor, in a house which I had built myself, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, and earned my living by the labor of my hands only. I lived there two years and two months. At present I am a sojourner in civilized life again. - - -

Near the end of March, 1845, I borrowed an axe and went down to the woods by Walden Pond, nearest to where I intended to build my house, and began to cut down some tall arrowy white pines, still in their youth, for timber. It is difficult to begin without borrowing, but perhaps it is the most generous course thus to permit your fellow-men to have an interest in your enterprise. The owner of the axe, as he released his hold on it, said that it was the apple of his eye; but I returned it sharper than I received it. It was a pleasant hillside where I worked, covered with pine woods, through which I looked out on the pond, and a small open field in the woods where pines and hickories were springing up. The ice in the pond was not yet dissolved, though there were some open spaces, and it was all dark colored and saturated with water. There were some slight flurries of snow during the days that I worked there; but for the most part when I came out on to the railroad, on my way home, its yellow sand heap stretched away gleaming in the hazy atmosphere, and the rails shone in the spring sun, and I heard the lark and pewee and other birds already come to commence another year with us. They were pleasant spring days, in which the winter of man's discontent was thawing as well as the earth, and the life that had lain torpid began to stretch itself. One

day, when my axe had come off and I had cut a green hickory for a wedge, driving it with a stone, and had placed the whole to soak in a pond hole in order to swell the wood, I saw a striped snake run into the water, and he lay on the bottom, apparently without inconvenience, as long as I stayed there, or more than a quarter of an hour; perhaps because he had not yet fairly come out of the torpid state. It appeared to me that for a like reason men remain in their present low and primitive condition; but if they should feel the influence of the spring of springs arousing them, they would of necessity rise to a higher and more ethereal life. I had previously seen the snakes in frosty mornings in my path with portions of their bodies still numb and inflexible, waiting for the sun to thaw them. On the 1st of April it rained and melted the ice, and in the early part of the day, which was very foggy, I heard a stray goose groping about over the pond and cackling as if lost, or like the spirit of the fog.

So I went on for some days cutting and hewing timber, and also studs and rafters, all with my narrow axe, not having many communicable or scholar-like thoughts, singing to myself,—

*Men say they know many things;
But lo! they have taken wings,—
The arts and sciences,
And a thousand appliances;
The wind that blows
Is all that anybody knows.*

I hewed the main timbers six inches square, most of the studs on two sides only, and the rafters and floor timbers on one side, leaving the rest of the bark on, so that they were just as straight and much stronger than sawed ones. Each stick was carefully mortised or tenoned by its stump, for I had borrowed other tools by this time. My days in the woods were not very long ones; yet I usually carried my dinner of bread and butter, and read the newspaper in which it was wrapped, at noon, sitting amid the green pine boughs which I had cut off, and to my bread was imparted some of their fragrance, for my hands were covered with a thick coat of pitch. Before I had done I was more the friend than the foe of the pine tree, though I had cut down some of them, having become better acquainted with it. Sometimes a rambler in the wood was attracted by the sound of my axe, and we chatted pleasantly over the chips which I had made.

By the middle of April, for I made no haste in my work, but rather made the most of it, my house was framed and ready for the raising. I had already bought the shanty of James Collins, an Irishman who worked on the Fitchburg Railroad, for boards. James Collins' shanty was considered an uncommonly fine one. When I called to see it he was not at home. I walked about the outside, at first unobserved from within, the window was so deep and high. It was of small dimensions, with a peaked cottage roof, and not much else to be seen, the dirt being raised five feet all around as if it were a compost heap. The roof was the soundest part, though a good deal warped and made brittle by the sun. Door-sill there was none, but a perennial passage for the hens under the door board. Mrs. C. came to the door and asked me to view it from the inside. The hens were driven in by my approach. It was dark, and had a dirt floor for the most part, dank, clammy, and aguish, only here a board and there a board which would not bear removal. She lighted a lamp to show me the inside of the roof and the walls, and also that the board floor extended under the bed, warning me not to step into the cellar, a sort of dust hole two feet deep. In her own words, they were "good boards overhead, good boards all around, and a good window,"—of two whole squares originally, only the cat had passed out that way lately. There was a stove, a bed, and a place to sit, an infant in the house where it was born, a silk parasol, gilt-framed looking-glass, and a patent new coffeemill nailed to an oak sapling, all told. The bargain was soon concluded, for James had in the meanwhile returned. I to pay four dollars and twenty-five cents tonight, he to vacate at five tomorrow morning, selling to nobody else meanwhile: I to take possession at six. It were well, he said, to be there early, and anticipate certain indistinct but wholly unjust claims on the score of ground rent and fuel. This he assured me was the only encumbrance. At six I passed him and his family on the road. One large bundle held their all,—bed, coffeemill, looking-glass, hens,—all but the cat; she took to the woods and became a wild cat, and, as I learned afterward, trod in a trap set for woodchucks, and so became a dead cat at last.

I took down this dwelling the same morning, drawing the nails, and removed it to the pond side by small cart-loads, spreading the boards on

the grass there to bleach and warp back again in the sun. One early thrush gave me a note or two as I drove along the woodland path. I was informed treacherously by a young Patrick that neighbor Seeley, an Irishman, in the intervals of the carting, transferred the still tolerable straight, and drivable nails, staples, and spikes to his pocket, and then stood when I came back to pass the time of day, and look freshly up, unconcerned, with spring thoughts, at the devastation; there being a dearth of work, as he said. He was there to represent spectatordom, and help make this seemingly insignificant event one with the removal of the gods of Troy.

I dug my cellar in the side of a hill sloping to the south, where a woodchuck had formerly dug his burrow, down through sumach and blackberry roots, and the lowest stain of vegetation, six feet square by seven deep, to a fine sand where potatoes would not freeze in any winter. The sides were left shelving, and not stoned; but the sun having never shown on them, the sand still keeps its place. It was but two hours' work. I took particular pleasure in this breaking of ground, for in almost all latitudes men dig into the earth for an equable temperature. Under the most splendid house in the city is still to be found the cellar where they store their roots as of old, and long after the superstructure has disappeared posterity remark its dent in the earth. The house is still but a sort of porch at the entrance of a burrow.

At length, in the beginning of May, with the help of some of my acquaintances, rather to improve so good an occasion for neighborliness than from any necessity, I set up the frame of my house. No man was ever more honored in the character of his raisers than I.¹ They are destined, I trust, to assist at the raising of loftier structures one day. I began to occupy my house on the 4th of July, as soon as it was boarded and roofed, for the boards were carefully feathered and lapped, so that it was perfectly impervious to rain; but before boarding I laid the foundation of a chimney at one end, bringing two cartloads of stones up the hill from the pond in my arms. I built the chimney after my hoeing in the fall, before a fire became necessary for warmth, doing my cooking in the meanwhile

¹ Among the "raisers" were Emerson, Alcott, William Ellery Channing the poet, and George William Curtis.

out of doors on the ground, early in the morning. which mode I still think is in some respects more convenient and agreeable than the usual one. When it stormed before my bread was baked, I fixed a few boards over the fire, and sat under them to watch my loaf, and passed some pleasant hours in that way. In those days, when my hands were much employed, I read but little, but the least scraps of paper which lay on the ground, my holder, or tablecloth, afforded me as much entertainment, in fact answered the same purpose as the *Iliad*.

Before winter I built a chimney, and shingled the sides of my house, which were already impervious to rain, with imperfect and sappy shingles made of the first slice of the log, whose edges I was obliged to straighten with a plane.

I have thus a tight shingled and plastered house, ten feet wide by fifteen long, and eight-feet posts, with a garret and a closet, a large window on each side, two trap doors, one door at the end, and a brick fireplace opposite. The exact cost of my house, paying the usual price for such materials as I used, but not counting the work, all of which was done by myself, was as follows; and I give the details because very few are able to tell exactly what their houses cost, and fewer still, if any, the separate cost of the various materials which compose them:—

Boards	\$8.03½, mostly shanty boards.
Refuse shingles for roof and sides...	4.00
Laths	1.25
Two second-hand windows with glass	2.43
One thousand old brick	4.00
Two casks of lime.	2.40
Hair .....	.31
Mantle-tree iron.	.15
Nails	3.90
Hinges and screws.	.14
Latch .....	.10
Chalk .....	.01
Transportation..	1.40
In all	\$28.12½

These are all the materials excepting the timber, stones, and sand, which I claimed by squatter's right. I have also a small wood-shed ad-

joining, made chiefly of the stuff which was left after building the house. - - -

For more than five years I maintained myself thus solely by the labor of my hands, and I found, that by working about six weeks in a year, I could meet all the expenses of living. The whole of my winters, as well as most of my summers, I had free and clear for study. I have thoroughly tried school-keeping, and found that my expenses were in proportion, or rather out of proportion, to my income, for I was obliged to dress and train, not to say think and believe, accordingly, and I lost my time into the bargain. As I did not teach for the good of my fellow-men, but simply for a livelihood, this was a failure. I have tried trade, but I found that it would take ten years to get under way in that, and that then I should probably be on my way to the devil. I was actually afraid that I might by that time be doing what is called a good business. When formerly I was looking about to see what I could do for a living, some sad experience in conforming to the wishes of friends being fresh in my mind to tax my ingenuity, I thought often and seriously of picking huckleberries; that surely I could do, and its small profits might suffice,—for my greatest skill has been to want but little,—so little capital it required, so little distraction from my wonted moods, I foolishly thought. While my acquaintances went unhesitatingly into trade or the professions, I contemplated this occupation as most like theirs; ranging the hills all summer to pick the berries which came in my way, and thereafter carelessly dispose of them; so, to keep the flocks of Admetus.² I also dreamed that I might gather the wild herbs, or carry evergreens to such villagers as loved to be reminded of the woods, even to the city, by hay-cart loads. But I have since learned that trade curses everything it handles; and though you trade in messages from heaven, the whole curse of trade attaches to the business.

As I preferred some things to others, and especially valued my freedom, as I could fare hard and yet succeed well, I did not wish to spend my time in earning rich carpets or other fine furniture, or delicate cookery, or a house in the Grecian or the Gothic style just yet. If there are any to whom it is no interruption to acquire these things, and who know how to use them

² Apollo once kept the flocks of King Admetus.

when acquired, I relinquish to them the pursuit. Some are "industrious," and appear to love labor for its own sake, or perhaps because it keeps them out of worse mischief; to such I have at present nothing to say. Those who would not know what to do with more leisure than they now enjoy, I might advise to work twice as hard as they do,—work till they pay for themselves, and get their free papers. For myself I found that the occupation of a day-laborer was the most independent of any, especially as it required only thirty or forty days in a year to support one. The laborer's day ends with the going down of the sun, and he is then free to devote himself to his chosen pursuit, independent of his labor; but his employer, who speculates from month to month, has no respite from one end of the year to the other.

In short, I am convinced, both by faith and experience, that to maintain one's self on this earth is not a hardship but a pastime, if we will live simply and wisely; as the pursuits of the simpler nations are still the sports of the more artificial. It is not necessary that a man should earn his living by the sweat of his brow, unless he sweats easier than I do. - - -

II. WHERE I LIVED, AND WHAT I LIVED FOR

When first I took up my abode in the woods, that is, began to spend my nights as well as days there, which, by accident, was on Independence Day, or the Fourth of July, 1845, my house was not finished for winter, but was merely a defence against the rain, without plastering or chimney, the walls being of rough, weather-stained boards, with wide chinks, which made it cool at night. The upright white hewn studs and freshly planed door and window casings gave it a clean and airy look, especially in the morning, when its timbers were saturated with dew, so that I fancied that by noon some sweet gum would exude from them. To my imagination it retained throughout the day more or less of this auroral character, reminding me of a certain house on a mountain which I had visited a year before. This was an airy and unplastered cabin, fit to entertain a travelling god, and where a goddess might trail her garments. The winds which

passed over my dwelling were such as sweep over the ridges of mountains, bearing the broken strains, or celestial parts only, of terrestrial music. The morning wind forever blows, the poem of creation is uninterrupted; but few are the ears that hear it. Olympus is but the outside of the earth everywhere.

The only house I had been the owner of before, if I except a boat, was a tent, which I used occasionally when making excursions in the summer, and this is still rolled up in my garret; but the boat, after passing from hand to hand, has gone down the stream of time. With this more substantial shelter about me, I had made some progress toward settling in the world. This frame, so slightly clad, was a sort of crystallization around me, and reacted on the builder. It was suggestive somewhat as a picture in outlines. I did not need to go outdoors to take the air, for the atmosphere within had lost none of its freshness. It was not so much within-doors as behind a door where I sat, even in the rainiest weather. The Harivansa says, "An abode without birds is like a meat without seasoning." Such was not my abode, for I found myself suddenly neighbor to the birds; not by having imprisoned one, but having caged myself near them. I was not only nearer to some of those which commonly frequent the garden and the orchard, but to those wilder and more thrilling songsters of the forest which never, or rarely, serenade a villager,—the wood thrush, the veery, the scarlet tanager, the field sparrow, the whip-poor-will, and many others.

I was seated by the shore of a small pond, about a mile and a half south of the village of Concord and somewhat higher than it, in the midst of an extensive wood between that town and Lincoln, and about two miles south of that our only field known to fame, Concord Battle Ground; but I was so low in the woods that the opposite shore, half a mile off, like the rest, covered with wood, was my most distant horizon. For the first week, whenever I looked out on the pond it impressed me like a tarn high up on the side of a mountain, its bottom far above the surface of other lakes, and, as the sun arose, I saw it throwing off its nightly clothing of mist, and here and there, by degrees, its soft ripples or its smooth reflecting surface was revealed, while the mists, like ghosts, were stealthily withdrawing in every direction into the woods, as at the breaking up of some nocturnal conventicle. The very dew seemed to

hang upon the trees later into the day than usual, as on the sides of mountains.

This small lake was of most value as a neighbor in the intervals of a gentle rain-storm in August, when, both air and water being perfectly still, but the sky overcast, mid-afternoon had all the serenity of evening, and the wood-thrush sang around, and was heard from shore to shore. A lake like this is never smoother than at such a time; and the clear portion of the air above it being shallow and darkened by clouds, the water, full of light and reflections, becomes a lower heaven itself so much the more important. From a hill-top near by, where the wood had been recently cut off, there was a pleasing vista southward across the pond, through a wide indentation in the hills which form the shore there, where their opposite sides sloping toward each other suggested a stream flowing out in that direction through a wooded valley, but stream there was none. That way I looked between and over the near green hills to some distant and higher ones in the horizon, tinged with blue. Indeed, by standing on tiptoe I could catch a glimpse of some of the peaks of the still bluer and more distant mountain ranges in the northwest, those true-blue coins from heaven's own mint, and also of some portion of the village. But in other directions, even from this point, I could not see over or beyond the woods which surrounded me. It is well to have some water in your neighborhood, to give buoyancy to and float the earth. One value even of the smallest well is, that when you look into it you see that earth is not continent but insular. This is as important as that it keeps butter cool. When I looked across the pond from this peak toward the Sudbury meadows, which in time of flood I distinguished elevated perhaps by a mirage in their seething valley, like a coin in a basin, all the earth beyond the pond appeared like a thin crust insulated and floated even by this small sheet of intervening water, and I was reminded that this on which I dwelt was but *dry land*.

Though the view from my door was still more contracted, I did not feel crowded or confined in the least. There was pasture enough for my imagination. The low shrub-oak plateau to which the opposite shore arose stretched away toward the prairies of the West and the steppes of Tartary, affording ample room for all the roving families of men. "There are none happy

in the world but beings who enjoy freely a vast horizon,"—said Damodara, when his herds required new and larger pastures.

Both place and time were changed, and I dwelt nearer to those parts of the universe and to those eras in history which had most attracted me. Where I lived was as far off as many a region viewed nightly by astronomers. We are wont to imagine rare and delectable places in some remote and more celestial corner of the system, behind the constellation of Cassiopeia's Chair, far from noise and disturbance. I discovered that my house actually had its site in such a withdrawn, but forever new and unprofaned, part of the universe. If it were worth the while to settle in those parts near to the Pleiades or the Hyades, to Aldebaran or Altair, then I was really there, or at an equal remoteness from the life which I had left behind, dwindled and twinkling with as fine a ray to my nearest neighbor, and to be seen only in moonless nights by him. Such was that part of creation where I had squatted;—

*"There was a shepherd that did live,
And held his thoughts as high
As were the mounts whereon his flocks
Did hourly feed him by."*

What should we think of the shepherd's life if his flocks always wandered to higher pastures than his thoughts?

Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal simplicity, and I may say innocence, with Nature herself. I have been as sincere a worshipper of Aurora as the Greeks. I got up early and bathed in the pond; that was a religious exercise, and one of the best things which I did. They say that characters were engraved on the bathing tub of King Tching-thang to this effect: "Renew thyself completely each day; do it again, and again, and forever again." I can understand that. Morning brings back the heroic ages. I was as much affected by the faint hum of a mosquito making its invisible and unimaginable tour through my apartment at earliest dawn, when I was sitting with door and windows open, as I could be by any trumpet that ever sang of fame. It was Homer's requiem; itself an Iliad and Odyssey in the air, singing its own wrath and wanderings. There was something cosmical about it; a standing advertisement, till forbidden, of the everlasting vigor and fertility of the world. The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening

hour. Then there is least somnolence in us; and for an hour, at least, some part of us awakes which slumbers all the rest of the day and night. Little is to be expected of that day, if it can be called a day, to which we are not awakened by our Genius, but by the mechanical nudgings of some servitor, are not awakened by our own newly-acquired force and aspirations from within, accompanied by the undulations of celestial music, instead of factory bells, and a fragrance filling the air—to a higher life than we fell asleep from, and thus the darkness bear its fruit, and prove itself to be good, no less than the light. That man who does not believe that each day contains an earlier, more sacred, and auroral hour than he has yet profaned, has despaired of life, and is pursuing a descending and darkening way. After a partial cessation of his sensuous life, the soul of man, or its organs rather, are reinvigorated each day, and his Genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events, I should say, transpire in morning time and in a morning atmosphere. The Vedas say, "All intelligences awake with the morning." Poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable of the actions of men, date from such an hour. All poets and heroes, like Memnon, are the children of Aurora, and emit their music at sunrise. To him whose elastic and vigorous thought keeps pace with the sun, the day is a perpetual morning. It matters not what the clocks say or the attitudes and labors of men. Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me. Moral reform is the effort to throw off sleep. Why is it that men give so poor an account of their day if they have not been slumbering? They are not such poor calculators. If they had not been overcome with drowsiness, they would have performed something. The millions are awake enough for physical labor; but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion, only one in a hundred millions to a poetic or divine life. To be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met a man who was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face?

We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep. I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor. It is something to be able to paint a particular

picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful; but it is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts. Every man is tasked to make his life, even in its details, worthy of the contemplation of his most elevated and critical hour. If we refused, or rather used up, such paltry information as we get, the oracles would distinctly inform us how this might be done.

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear, nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have *somewhat hastily* concluded that it is the chief end of man here to "glorify God and enjoy him forever."

Still we live meanly, like ants; though the fable tells us that we were long ago changed into men; like pygmies we fight with cranes; it is error upon error, and clout upon clout, and our best virtue has for its occasion a superfluous and evitable wretchedness. Our life is frittered away by detail. An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers, or in extreme cases he may add his ten toes, and lump the rest. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumb-nail. In the midst of this chopping sea of civilized life, such are the clouds and storms and quicksands and thousand-and-one items to be allowed for, that a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom and not make his port at all, by dead reckoning, and he must

be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify, simplify. Instead of three meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one; instead of a hundred dishes, five; and reduce other things in proportion. Our life is like a German Confederacy, made up of petty states, with its boundary forever fluctuating, so that even a German cannot tell you how it is bounded at any moment. The nation itself, with all its so-called internal improvements, which, by the way are all external and superficial, is just such an unwieldy and overgrown establishment, cluttered with furniture and tripped up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and heedless expense, by want of calculation and a worthy aim, as the million households in the land; and the only cure for it, as for them, is in a rigid economy, a stern and more than Spartan simplicity of life and elevation of purpose. It lives too fast. Men think that it is essential that the *Nation* have commerce, and export ice, and talk through a telegraph, and ride thirty miles an hour, without a doubt, whether *they* do or not; but whether we should live like baboons or like men, is a little uncertain. If we do not get out sleepers, and forge rails, and devote days and nights to the work, but go on tinkering upon our lives to improve *them*, who will build railroads? And if railroads are not built, how shall we get to heaven in season? But if we stay at home and mind our business, who will want railroads? We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us. Did you ever think what those sleepers are that underlie the railroad? Each one is a man, an Irishman, or a Yankee man. The rails are laid on them, and they are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them. They are sound sleepers, I assure you. And every few years a new lot is laid down and run over; so that, if some have the pleasure of riding on a rail, others have the misfortune to be ridden upon. And when they run over a man that is walking in his sleep, a supernumerary sleeper in the wrong position, and wake him up, they suddenly stop the cars and make a hue and cry about it, as if this were an exception. I am glad to know that it takes a gang of men for every five miles to keep the sleepers down and level in their beds as it is, for this is a sign that they may sometime get up again.

Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life? We are determined to be starved before we are hungry. Men say that a stitch in

time saves nine, and so they take a thousand stitches to-day to save nine to-morrow. As for *work*, we haven't any of any consequence. We have the Saint Vitus's dance, and cannot possibly keep our heads still. If I should only give a few pulls at the parish bell-rope, as for a fire, that is, without setting the bell, there is hardly a man on his farm in the outskirts of Concord, notwithstanding that press of engagements which was his excuse so many times this morning, nor a boy, nor a woman, I might almost say, but would forsake all and follow that sound, not mainly to save property from the flames, but, if we will confess the truth, much more to see it burn, since burn it must, and we, be it known, did not set it on fire,—or to see it put out, and have a hand in it, if that is done as handsomely; yes, even if it were the parish church itself. Hardly a man takes a half-hour's nap after dinner, but when he wakes he holds up his head and asks, "What's the news?" as if the rest of mankind had stood his sentinels. Some give directions to be waked every half-hour doubtless for no other purpose; and then, to pay for it, they tell what they have dreamed. After a night's sleep the news is as indispensable as the breakfast. "Pray tell me anything new that has happened to a man anywhere on this globe,"—and he reads it over his coffee and rolls, that a man has had his eyes gouged out this morning on the Wachito River; never dreaming the while that he lives in the dark unfathomed mammoth cave of this world, and has but the rudiment of an eye himself.

For my part, I could easily do without the post-office. I think that there are very few important communications made through it. To speak critically, I never received more than one or two letters in my life (I wrote this some years ago) that were worth the postage. The penny-post is, commonly, an institution through which you seriously offer a man that penny for his thoughts which is so often safely offered in jest. And I am sure that I never read any memorable news in a newspaper. If we read of one man robbed, or murdered, or killed by accident, or one house burned, or one vessel wrecked, or one steam-boat blown up, or one cow run over on the Western Railroad, or one mad dog killed, or one lot of grasshoppers in the winter,—we never need read of another. One is enough. If you are acquainted with the principle, what do

you care for a myriad instances and applications? To a philosopher all *news*, as it is called, is gossip, and they who edit and read it are old women over their tea. Yet not a few are greedy after this gossip. There was such a rush, as I hear, the other day at one of the offices to learn the foreign news by the last arrival, that several large squares of plate glass belonging to the establishment were broken by the pressure,—news which I seriously think a ready wit might write a twelvemonth, or twelve years, beforehand with sufficient accuracy. As for Spain, for instance, if you know how to throw in Don Carlos and the Infanta, and Don Pedro and Seville and Granada, from time to time in the right proportions,—they may have changed the names a little since I saw the papers,—and serve up a bull-fight when other entertainments fail, it will be true to the letter, and give us as good an idea of the exact state of ruin of things in Spain as the most succinct and lucid reports under this head in the newspapers: and as for England, almost the last significant scrap of news from that quarter was the revolution of 1649; and if you have learned the history of her crops for an average year, you never need attend to that thing again, unless your speculations are of a merely pecuniary character. If one may judge who rarely looks into the newspapers, nothing new does ever happen in foreign parts, a French revolution not excepted.

What news! how much more important to know what that is which was never old! "Kieou-he-yu (great dignitary of the state of Wei) sent a man to Khoung-tseu to know his news. Khoung-tseu caused the messenger to be seated near him, and questioned him in these terms: What is your master doing? The messenger answered with respect: My master desires to diminish the number of his faults, but he cannot come to the end of them. The messenger being gone, the philosopher remarked: "What a worthy messenger! What a worthy messenger!" The preacher, instead of vexing the ears of drowsy farmers on their day of rest at the end of the week,—for Sunday is the fit conclusion of an ill-spent week, and not the fresh and brave beginning of a new one,—with this one other draggletail of a sermon, should shout with thundering voice, "Pause! Avast! Why so seeming fast, but deadly slow?"

Shams and delusions are esteemed for soundest truths, while reality is fabulous. If men would

steadily observe realities only, and not allow themselves to be deluded, life, to compare it with such things as we know, would be like a fairy tale and the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. If we respected only what is inevitable and has a right to be, music and poetry would resound along the streets. When we are unhurried and wise, we perceive that only great and worthy things have any permanent and absolute existence, that petty fears and petty pleasures are but the shadow of the reality. This is always exhilarating and sublime. By closing the eyes and slumbering, and consenting to be deceived by shows, men establish and confirm their daily life of routine and habit everywhere, which still is built on purely illusory foundations. Children, who play life, discern its true law and relations more clearly than men, who fail to live it worthily, but who think that they are wiser by experience, that is, by failure. I have read in a Hindoo book, that "there was a king's son, who, being expelled in infancy from his native city, was brought up by a forester, and, growing up to maturity in that state, imagined himself to belong to the barbarous race with which he lived. One of his father's ministers having discovered him, revealed to him what he was, and the misconception of his character was removed, and he knew himself to be a prince. So soul," continues the Hindoo philosopher, "from the circumstances in which it is placed, mistakes its own character, until the truth is revealed to it by some holy teacher, and then it knows itself to be *Brahme*." I perceive that we inhabitants of New England live this mean life that we do because our vision does not penetrate the surface of things. We think that that is which *appears* to be. If a man should walk through this town and see only the reality, where, think you, would the "Mill-dam" go to? If he should give us an account of the realities he beheld there, we should not recognize the place in his description. Look at a meeting-house, or a court-house, or a jail, or a shop, or a dwelling-house, and say what that thing really is before a true gaze, and they would all go to pieces in your account of them. Men esteem truth remote, in the outskirts of the system, behind the farthest star, before Adam and after the last man. In eternity there is indeed something true and sublime. But all these times and places and occasions are now and here. God himself culminates in the present moment, and

will never be more divine in the lapse of all the ages. And we are enabled to apprehend at all what is sublime and noble only by the perpetual instilling and drenching of the reality that surrounds us. The universe constantly and obediently answers to our conceptions; whether we travel fast or slow, the track is laid for us. Let us spend our lives in conceiving then. The poet or the artist never yet had so fair and noble a design but some of his posterity at least could accomplish it.

Let us spend one day as deliberately as Nature, and not be thrown off the track by every nutshell and mosquito's wing that falls on the rails. Let us rise early and fast, or break fast, gently and without perturbation; let company come and let company go, let the bells ring and the children cry,—determined to make a day of it. Why should we knock under and go with the stream? Let us not be upset and overwhelmed in that terrible rapid and whirlpool called a dinner, situated in the meridian shallows. Weather this danger and you are safe, for the rest of the way is down hill. With unrelaxed nerves, with morning vigor, sail by it, looking another way, tied to the mast like Ulysses. If the engine whistles, let it whistle till it is hoarse for its pains. If the bell rings, why should we run? We will consider what kind of music they are like. Let us settle ourselves, and work and wedge our feet downward through the mud and slush of opinion, and prejudice, and tradition, and delusion, and appearance, that alluvion which covers the globe, through Paris and London, through New York and Boston and Concord, through Church and State, through poetry and philosophy and religion, till we come to a hard bottom and rocks in place, which we can call *reality*, and say, This is, and no mistake; and then begin, having a *point d'appui*, below freshet and frost and fire, a place where you might found a wall or a state, or set a lamp-post safely, or perhaps a gauge, not a Nilometer, but a Realometer, that future ages might know how deep a freshet of shams and appearances had gathered from time to time. If you stand right fronting and face to face to a fact, you will see the sun glimmer on both its surfaces, as if it were a cimeter, and feel its sweet edge dividing you through the heart and marrow, and so you will happily conclude your mortal career. Be it life or death, we crave only reality. If we are really dying, let us hear the rattle in

our throats and feel cold in the extremities; if we are alive, let us go about our business.

Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in. I drink at it; but while I drink I see the sandy bottom and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current slides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper; fish in the sky, whose bottom is pebbly with stars. I cannot count one. I know not the first letter of the alphabet. I have always been regretting that I was not as wise as the day I was born. The intellect is a cleaver; it discerns and rifts its way into the secret of things. I do not wish to be any more busy with my hands than is necessary. My head is hands and feet. I feel all my best faculties concentrated in it. My instinct tells me that my head is an organ for burrowing, as some creatures use their snout and forepaws, and with it I would mine and burrow my way through these hills. I think that the richest vein is somewhere hereabouts; so by the divining-rod and thin rising vapors I judge; and here I will begin to mine.

XVIII. CONCLUSION

I left the woods for as good a reason as I went there. Perhaps it seemed to me that I had several more lives to live, and could not spare any more time for that one. It is remarkable how easily and insensibly we fall into a particular route, and make a beaten track for ourselves. I had not lived there a week before my feet wore a path from my door to the pond-side; and though it is five or six years since I trod it, it is still quite distinct. It is true, I fear that others may have fallen into it, and so helped to keep it open. The surface of the earth is soft and impressible by the feet of men; and so with the paths which the mind travels. How worn and dusty, then, must be the highways of the world, how deep the ruts of tradition and conformity! I did not wish to take a cabin passage, but rather to go before the mast and on the deck of the world, for there I could best see the moonlight amid the mountains. I do not wish to go below now.

I learned this, at least, by my experiment; that if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. He will put some

things behind, will pass an invisible boundary; new, universal, and more liberal laws will begin to establish themselves around and within him; or the old laws be expanded, and interpreted in his favor in a more liberal sense, and he will live with the license of a higher order of beings. In proportion as he simplifies his life, the laws of the universe will appear less complex, and solitude will not be solitude, nor poverty poverty, nor weakness weakness. If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.³ - - -

POEMS

In spite of its merits, Thoreau's poetry does not quite come up to his own standard as stated in *A Week*: "A poem is one undivided, unimpeded expression fallen ripe into literature, and it is undividedly and unimpededly received by those for whom it was matured." On November 11, 1842, Emerson wrote in his journal a criticism which might with equal truth be applied to his own poetry:

"Last night Henry Thoreau read me verses which pleased, if not by beauty of particular lines, yet by the honest truth, and by the length of flight and strength of wing, for most of our poets are only writers of lines or of epigrams. These of Henry's at least have rude strength, and we do not come to the bottom of the mine. Their fault is, that the gold does not yet flow pure, but is drossy and crude."

In force and vividness they remind one of the yet unwritten poems of Emily Dickinson. "Mist" and "Haze," both written before *Leaves of Grass*, are essentially free verse. There is something of Greek concreteness and simplicity about his poems.

"Smoke" appears in *Walden* (1854). "Prayer" was printed by Emerson in the *Dial* for July, 1842. "Life," an uncollected poem, was published first in

³ It should be evident to any one who has read these selections from *Walden* that the following well-known passage in Lowell's essay on Thoreau was not based on a real understanding of Thoreau's reasons for living at Walden: "His shanty life was a mere impossibility, so far as his own conception of it goes, as an entire independency of mankind. The tub of Diogenes had a sounder bottom. Thoreau's experiment actually presupposed all that complicated civilization which it theoretically abjured. He squatted on another man's [Emerson's] land; he borrows an ax; his boards, his nails, his bricks, his mortar, his books, his lamp, his fish-hooks, his plough, his hoe, all turn state's evidence against him as an accomplice in the sin of that artificial civilization which rendered it possible that such a person as Henry D. Thoreau should exist at all."

Autograph Leaves of Our Country's Authors, printed in Baltimore in 1864 to raise funds for Union soldiers. In December, 1930, Professor Raymond Adams of the University of North Carolina reprinted the poem for the first time. The other poems all are found in *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849), although some of them had appeared already in the *Dial*.

MY PRAYER

(1842)

Great God, I ask thee for no meaner pelf
Than that I may not disappoint myself,
That in my action I may soar as high
As I can now discern with this clear eye.

And next in value, which thy kindness lends,
That I may greatly disappoint my friends,
Howe'er they think or hope that it may be,
They may not dream how thou'st distinguished me.

That my weak hand may equal my firm faith,
And my life practice more than my tongue saith;
That my low conduct may not show,
Nor my relenting lines,
That I thy purpose did not know,
Or overrated thy designs.

SMOKE

(1843)

Light-winged smoke, Icarian bird,
Melting thy pinions in thy upward flight,
Lark without song, and messenger of dawn,
Circling above the hamlets as thy nest;
Or else, departing dream, and shadowy form
Of midnight vision, gathering up thy skirts;
By night star-veiling, and by day
Darkening the light and blotting out the sun;
Go thou my incense upward from this hearth,
And ask the gods to pardon this clear flame.

THE RESPECTABLE FOLKS

(1849)

The respectable folks,—
Where dwell they?
They whisper in the oaks,
And they sigh in the hay;
Summer and winter, night and day,

Out on the meadow, there dwell they.
 They never die,
 Nor snivel, nor cry,
 Nor ask our pity
 With a wet eye.
 A sound estate they ever mend,
 To every asker readily lend;
 To the ocean wealth,
 To the meadow health,
 To Time his length,
 To the rocks strength,
 To the stars light,
 To the weary night,
 To the busy day,
 To the idle play;
 And so their good cheer never ends,
 For all are their debtors, and all their friends.

LINES

(1849)

In *A Week* Thoreau mentions meeting some men on a scow bound down the Merrimac River. "They appeared to be green hands from far among the hills, who had taken this means to get to the sea-board, and see the world; and would possibly visit the Falkland Isles, and the China seas, before they again saw the waters of the Merrimack, or perchance, not return this way forever. . . . What grievance has its root among the New Hampshire hills? we asked; what is wanting to human life here, that these men should make such haste to the antipodes? We prayed that their bright anticipations might not be rudely disappointed."

Though all the fates should prove unkind,
 Leave not your native land behind.
 The ship, becalmed, at length stands still;
 The steed must rest beneath the hill;
 But swiftly still our fortunes pace,
 To find us out in every place.

The vessel, though her masts be firm,
 Beneath her copper bears a worm;
 Around the cape, across the line,
 Till fields of ice her course confine;
 It matters not how smooth the breeze,
 How shallow or how deep the seas,
 Whether she bears Manilla twine,
 Or in her hold Madeira wine,
 Or China teas, or Spanish hides,
 In port or quarantine she rides;
 Far from New England's blustering shore,
 New England's worm her hulk shall bore,

And sink her in the Indian seas,
 Twine, wine, and hides, and China teas.

RUMORS FROM AN ÆOLIAN HARP

(1849)

In *A Week* this poem is preceded by the following paragraph:

"Music is the sound of the universal laws promulgated. It is the only assured tone. There are in it such strains as far surpass any man's faith in the loftiness of his destiny. Things are to be learned which it will be worth the while to learn. Formerly I heard these ['Rumors from an Æolian Harp']."

There is a vale which none hath seen,
 Where foot of man has never been,
 Such as here lives with toil and strife,
 An anxious and a sinful life.

There every virtue has its birth,
 Ere it descends upon the earth,
 And thither every deed returns,
 Which in the generous bosom burns.

There love is warm, and youth is young,
 And poetry is yet unsung,
 For Virtue still adventures there,
 And freely breathes her native air.

And ever, if you hearken well,
 You still may hear its vesper bell,
 And tread of high-souled men go by,
 Their thoughts conversing with the sky.

MIST

(1849)

In *A Week* Thoreau speaks of passing a canal boat in the fog before sunrise. He goes on: "A slight mist, through which objects are faintly visible, has the effect of expanding even ordinary streams, by a singular mirage, into arms of the sea or inland lakes. In the present instance it was even fragrant and invigorating, and we enjoyed it as a sort of earlier sunshine, or dewy and embryo light."

Low-anchored cloud,
 Newfoundland air,
 Fountain-head and source of rivers,
 Dew-cloth, dream drapery,
 And napkin spread by fays;
 Drifting meadow of the air,
 Where bloom the daisied banks and violets.

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And in whose fenny labyrinth
The bittern booms and heron wades,
Spirit of lakes and seas and rivers,
Bear only perfumes and the scent
Of healing herbs to just men's fields.

HAZE

(1849)

In *A Week* this poem is preceded by the following sentence: "The haze, the sun's dust of travel, had a lethean influence on the land and its inhabitants, and all creatures resigned themselves to float upon the inappreciable tides of nature."

Woof of the sun, ethereal gauze,
Woven of Nature's richest stuffs,
Visible heat, air-water, and dry sea,
Last conquest of the eye;
Toil of the day displayed, sun-dust,
Aerial surf upon the shores of earth,
Ethereal estuary, frith of light,
Breakers of air, billows of heat,
Fine summer spray on inland seas;
Bird of the sun, transparent-winged,
Owlet of noon, soft-pinioned,
From heath or stubble rising without song;
Establish thy serenity o'er the fields.

LIFE

(1864)

My life is like a stately warrior horse,
5 That walks with fluent pace along the way,
And I the upright horseman that bestrides
His flexuous back, feeling my private thoughts —
Alas, when will this rambling head and neck
Be welded to that firm and brawny breast?—
10 But still my steady steed goes proudly forth,
Mincing his stately steps along the road;
The sun may set, the silver moon may rise,
But my unresting steed holds on his way.
He is far gone ere this, you fain would say,
15 He is far going. Plants grow and rivers run;
You ne'er may look upon the ocean waves,
At morn or eventide, but you will see
Far in th' horizon with expanded sail,
Some solitary bark stand out to sea,
20 Far bound—well so my life sails far,
To double some far cape not yet explored.
A cloud ne'er standeth in the summer's sky,
The eagle sailing high, with outspread wings
Cleaving the silent air, resteth him not
25 A moment in his flight, the air is not his perch.
Nor doth my life fold its unwearied wings.
And hide its head within its downy breast,
But still it plows its shoreless seas of time,
Breasting the waves with an unsanded bow.

APPENDIX

ENGLISH WRITERS ON AMERICA

Our literature is only one of several literatures written in the English language, and American writers are not the only ones who have described life in the United States. The part played by America in English literature is larger than is generally supposed. For over a century and a half Americans were subjects of the British crown, and alert English writers had some interest in the far-off portion of the British Empire to which many Englishmen had migrated. Although after 1775 the course of Anglo-American relations was a troubled one, British interest in the United States continued. As time went on, more and more English writers visited the United States. They found it profitable to give lectures or readings from their works to American audiences, and they often recorded their impressions of American life in magazine articles and travel books. Americans read what these visitors wrote, and were either greatly pleased or highly irritated at the opinions expressed. They were displeased when Dickens pointed out the shortcomings of American manners or when Matthew Arnold pronounced American life uninteresting and lacking in distinction. They were pleased when James Bryce interpreted American life sympathetically in *The American Commonwealth*, which was more widely read in this country than in England. Sometimes a British writer's treatment of American life suggested to American writers that that life had greater literary possibilities than they had realized. American readers of Scott's romances noted with approval the great romancer's inclusion of an American episode in *Peveril of the Peak*, which is the ultimate source of Hawthorne's "The Gray Champion" and of other American works of fiction and drama.

The British attitude toward America exhibits a curious vacillation between two opposing points of view. The Elizabethan poets took the romantic view and prophesied a great future for the British colonies, but the London dramatists saw Virginia as the last refuge of vagabonds and criminals. In the eighteenth century Bishop Berkeley thought that Europe was declining and America was the hope of the future, but Samuel Johnson pronounced the Americans "a race of convicts [who] ought to be thankful for any thing we allow them short of hanging." In the nineteenth century Anglo-American relations were often unfriendly, and prejudice against the United States was widespread, especially in aristocratic and intellectual circles; but as England became more and more of a real democracy, the snobbish attitude declined. It became increasingly difficult for Englishmen to look down upon a nation obviously destined to become a world power or to adopt the condescending attitude toward a literature

ENGLISH WRITERS-----ON AMERICA

rapidly becoming, like those of Russia and the Scandinavian countries, too important to ignore. Finally, with American participation in two world wars in which our men, weapons, and war materials proved to be the deciding factor, England and the world at large have seen the emergence of the United States as one of the few great world powers. The result is seen in an increased interest in America, now regarded as the chief hope of Western civilization.

On the European continent, interest in the United States, except in France, was not important until after the middle of the nineteenth century. French interest, however, has long been keen, and America plays a considerable part in the writings of Frenchmen, notably Chateaubriand and Alexis de Tocqueville. The selections included here are taken from English writers, for it is not easy to find good translations from the Continental writers who have written about America. In this edition the works of European writers are placed in an Appendix to prevent the unwary reader from confusing them with the works of American writers.

I. The Colonial Period, 1607-1765

MICHAEL DRAYTON

1563 - 1631

A number of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English poets mention the Virginia colony. George Sandys wrote a part of his translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* while living in Jamestown as secretary of the colony. In many American libraries using the Dewey system of classification his book is classed as American literature. Michael Drayton, who wrote more often of Virginia than other poets of his time, addressed a poem "To Master George Sandys, Treasurer for the English Colony in Virginia," in which the following lines appear:

*"And (worthy George) by industry and use,
Let's see what lines Virginia will produce;
Goe on with OVID, as you haue begunne,
With the first fve Bookes; let your numbers run
Glib as the former, so shall it liue long,
And doe much honour to the English tongue:
Intice the Muses thither to repaire,
Intreat them gently, trayne them to that ayre,
For they from hence may thither hap to fly, . . ."*

Drayton's fine ode, "To the Virginian Voyage," was probably written in 1606 before the sailing of John Smith and his companions.

TO THE VIRGINIAN VOYAGE

(1606?)

You braue Heroique minds,
Worthy your Countries Name;
That Honour still pursue,
Goe, and subdue,

5

Whilst loy'tring Hinds
Lurke here at home, with shame.

Britans, you stay too long,
Quickly aboard bestow you,
And with a merry Gale
Swell your stretch'd Sayle,

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With Vowes as strong,
As the Winds that blow you.

Your Course securely steere,
West and by South forth keepe, 5
Rocks, Lee-shores, nor Sholes,
When EOLV^s scowles,
You need not feare,
Sô absolute the Deepe.

And cheerefully at Sea,
 Successe you still intice,
 To get the Pearle and Gold,
 And ours to hold,
 VIRGINIA, 15
 Earth's onely Paradise.

Where Nature hath in store
Fowle, Venison, and Fish,
And the Fruitfull'st Soyle, 20
Without your Toyle,
Three Haruests more,
All greater then your Wish.

And the ambitious Vine 25
Crownes with his purple Masse,
 The cedar reaching hie
 To kisse the Sky
The Gypresse, Pine
And vse-full Sassafras. 30

To whome, the golden Age
Still Natures lawes doth giue,
No other Cares that tend,
But Them to defend 35
From Winters rage,
That long there doth not liue.

¹ Æolus, god of the winds.

When as the Lushious smell
Of that delicious Land,
 Above the Seas that flowes,
 The cleere Wind throwes,
Your Hearts to swell
Approaching the deare Strande.

In kenning of the Shore
(Thanks to God first giuen,) O you the happy'st men,
Be Frolike then,
Let Cannons roare,
Frighting the wide Heauen.

And in Regions farre
Such Heroes bring yee foorth,
As those from whom We came,
And plant Our name,
Vnder that Starre
Not knowne vnto our North.

And as there Plenty grows
Of Lawrell euery where,
 APOLLO's Sacred tree,
 You may it see,
A Poets Browes
To crowne, that may sing there.

Thy Voyages attend,
Industrious HAKLVIT,²
Whose Reading shall inflame
Men to seeke Fame,
And much commend
To after-Times thy Wit.

² Richard Hakluyt (1552?-1616), who devoted most of his life to publishing accounts of English explorations.

JOHN DONNE

1572 - 1631

from SERMON PREACHED TO THE HONOURABLE COMPANY OF THE VIRGINIAN PLANTATION

(1622)

The greatest of the "Metaphysical Poets" had a keen interest in Virginia. In fact, he once sought unsuccessfully an appointment as secretary of the colony. He addressed a poem to Captain John Smith, which was published in Smith's *Generall Historie of Virginia*. From 1621 until his death ten years later Donne was Dean of St. Paul's in London and one of the greatest English preachers of the seventeenth century.

God sayes to you, *No Kingdome*, not *ease*, not *abundance*; nay *nothing at all yet*; the Plantation shall not discharge the Charges, not defray it selfe yet; but yet already, now at first, it shall conduce to great uses. It shall redeeme many a wretch from the Jawes of death, from the hands of the Executioner, upon whom, perchance a small fault, or perchance a first fault, or perchance a fault heartily and sincerely repented, perchance no fault, but malice, had otherwise cast a present, and ignominious death. It shall sweep your streets, and wash your dores, from idle persons, and the children of idle persons, and imploy them: and truly, if the whole Countrey were but such a *Bridewell*,¹ to force idle persons to work, it had a good use. But it is already, not onely a *Spleene*, to draine the ill humours of the body, but a *Liver*, to breed good blood; already the imployment breeds Marriners; already the place gives essayes, nay Fraytes of Marchantable commodities; already it is a marke for the Envy, and for the ambition of our Enemies; I speake but of our *doctrinall*, not *Nationall* Enemies; as they are *Papists*, they are

¹ A house of correction in London.

sorry we have this Countrey; and surely, twenty Lectures in matter of Controversie, doe not so much vexee them, as one Ship that goes, & strengthens that Plantation. Neither can I recommend it to you by any better *Retorique*, then [than] their malice. They would gladly have it, and therefore let us bee glad to hold it. - - -

Those of our profession that goe, you that send them who goe, do all an *Apostolicall* function. What action soever, hath in the first intention thereof, a purpose to propagate the Gospell of *Christ Jesus*, that is an *Apostolicall* action. Before the ende of the world come, before this mortality shall put on immortalitie, before the Creature shall be delivered of the bondage of corruption under which it groanes, before the Martyrs under the Altar shall be silenc'd, before all things shall be subdued to *Christ*, his kingdome perfected, & the last Enemy Death destroyed, the Gospell must be preached to those men to whom ye send; to all men; further² and hasten you this blessed, this joyfull, this glorious consummation of all, and happie reunion of all bodies to their Soules, by preaching the *Gospell* to those men. Preach to them *Doctrinally*, preach to them *Practically*; Enamore them with your *Justice*, and (as farre as may consist with your security), your *Civilitie*; but inflame them with your *godlinesse*, and your *Religion*. Bring them to *love* and *Reverence* the name of that *King*, that sends men to teach them the wayes of *Civilitie* in this world, but to *feare* and *adore* the Name of that *King of Kings*, that sends men to teach them the waies of Religion, for the next world. Those amongst you, that are old now, shall passe out of this world with this great comfort, that you contributed to the beginning of that Common Wealth, and of that Church,

² Further.

though they live not to see the groath thereof to perfection. *Apollos* watred, but *Paul* planted; hee that begun the worke, was the greater man. And you that are young now, may live to see the Enemy as much empeach'd by that place, and your friends, yea Children, as well accommodated in that place, as any other. You shall

have made this *Iland*, which is but as the *Suburbs* of the old world, a Bridge, a Gallery to the new; to joyne all to that world that shall never grow old, the Kingdome of heaven; You shall add persons to this Kingdome, and to the Kingdome of heaven, and adde names to the Bookes of our Chronicles, and to the Booke of Life. - -

BEN JONSON, 1572 - 1637

GEORGE CHAPMAN, 1559? - 1634?

JOHN MARSTON, 1575? - 1634

[A Scene in the Blue Anchor Tavern]
from *EASTWARD HOE* (1605)

Eastward Hoe, one of the best Elizabethan comedies, was written and acted before the settlement of Jamestown. The scene which is given in part below illustrates the method by which immigrants were often induced to come to the New World. Captain Seagull's description of the marvels of Virginia is partly borrowed from Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*.

Act Three, Scene iii

Enter Seagull, Spendall, and Scapethrift, in the [Blue Anchor] Taverne, with a Drawer.

SEAGULL. Come, drawer, pierce your neatest hogsheades, and lets have cheare, not fit for your Billingsgate taverne, but for our Virginian colonel; he wilbe here instantly.

DRAWER. You shall have all things fit, sir; please you have any more wine?

SPENDALL. More wine, slave! Whether we drinke it or no, spill it, and drawe more.

SCAPETHRIFT. Fill all the pottes in your house with all sorts of licour, and let 'hem waite on us here like souldiers in their pewter coates;

and though we doe not employe them now, yet wee will maintaine 'hem till we doe.

DRAWER. Said like an honourable captaine; you shall have all you can command, sir.

Exit Drawer.

SEAGULL. Come, boyes, Virginia longs till we share the rest of her maiden-head.

SPENDALL. Why, is she inhabited already with any English?

10 SEAGULL. A whole country of English is there man, bred of those that were left in 79;¹ they have married with the Indians, and make 'hem bring forth as beautifull faces as any we have in England; and therefore the Indians are so
15 in love with 'hem that all the treasure they have they lay at their feete.

SCAPETHRIFT. But is there such treasure there, captaine, as I have heard?

SEAGULL. I tell thee, golde is more plentifull there then [than] copper is with us; and for as
20 much redde copper as I can bring, Ile have

¹ This is perhaps a reference to the "Lost Colony" of Roanoke in what is now North Carolina, but the date should be 1587.

thrice the waight in golde. Why, man, all their
dripping pans and their chamber pottes are
pure gold; and all the chaines with which they
chaune up their streetes are massie golde; al
the prisoners they take are fetterd in gold; and
for rubies and diamonds, they goe forth on
holydayes and gather 'hem by the sea-shore, to
hang on their childrens coates, and sticke in
their capps, as commonly as our children weare
saffron guilt brooches and groates with hoales
in 'hem.

SCAPETHRIFT. And is it a pleasant countrie
withall?

SEAGULL. As ever the sunne shinde on; tem-
perate and full of all sorts of excellent viands:
wilde boare is as common there as our tamest
bacon is here; venison as mutton. And then
you shall live freely there, without sargeants,
or courtiers, or lawyers, or intelligencers, onely
a few industrious Scots perhaps, who indeed
are disperst over the face of the whole earth.
But as for them, there are no greater friends
to English men and England, when they are
out an't [of it], in the world, then they are.
And for my part, I would a hundred thousand
of 'hem were there, for wee are all one coun-
trymen now, yee know, and wee shoulde finde

ten times more comfort of them there then wee
doe heere.² Then for your meanes to advance-
ment, there it is simple, and not preposter-
ously mixt. You may be an alderman there,
and never be scavenger. you may be a noble-
man, and never be a slave. You may come to
preferment enough, and never be a pandar,
to riches and fortune inough, and have never
the more villanie nor the lesse wit. Besides,
there we shall have no more law then con-
science, and not too much of either; serve God
inough, eate and drinke inough, and "inough
is as good as a feast."

SPENDALL. Gods me! and how farre is it thether?

SEAGULL. Some six weekes sayle, no more, with
any indifferent good winde. And if I get to
any part of the coaste of Affrica, Ile saile
thether with any winde; or when I come to
Cape Finister, ther's a foreright winde con-
tinuall wafts us till we come at Virginia. See,
our collonell's come. - - -

² When James VI of Scotland became James I of
England in 1603, so many Scottish adventurers came
to London that they were fair marks for satire. The
above speech or others of the same kind caused Chap-
man and Marston to be thrown into jail. See Alfred
Noyes's "Big Ben" in *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern*.

MRS. FELICIA DOROTHEA (BROWNE) HEMANS

1793 - 1835

THE LANDING OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS IN NEW ENGLAND

(1826)

Of the work of this once popular English Romantic
poetess—widely read in America as well as in Eng-
land—practically everything has been forgotten ex-
cept the first line of her "Casabianca":

"The boy stood on the burning deck."

Older American school-readers gave a wide currency
to the following poem.

The breaking waves dashed high
On the stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods against a stormy sky,
Their giant branches tossed;

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And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true-hearted, came;
Not with the roll of the surring drums,
And the trumpet that sings of fame;

Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear;—
They shook the depths of the desert gloom
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea;
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
To the anthem of the free.

The ocean eagle soared
From his nest by the white wave's foam,

And the rocking pines of the forest roared,—
This was their welcome home!

There were men with hoary hair
5 Amidst that pilgrim band;
Why had *they* come to wither there,
Away from their childhood's land?

There was woman's fearless eye,
10 Lit by her deep love's truth;
There was manhood's brow serenely high,
And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?
15 Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?—
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Aye, call it holy ground,
20 The soil where first they trod;
They have left unstained what there they
found,—
Freedom to worship God.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

1770 - 1850

[The Pilgrim Fathers]

These two little-known sonnets were added as an afterthought to Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Sonnets* at the suggestion of his American editor, Professor Henry Reed.

(1845)

Well worthy to be magnified are they
Who, with sad hearts, of friends and country took
A last farewell, their loved abodes forsook,
And hallowed ground in which their fathers lay;
Then to the new-found World explored their
way,
That so a Church, unforced, uncalled to brook

Ritual restraints, within some sheltering nook
Her Lord might worship and His word obey
In freedom. Men they were who could not bend;
Blest Pilgrims, surely, as they took for guide
5 A will by sovereign Conscience sanctified;
Blest while their Spirits from the woods ascend
Along a Galaxy that knows no end,
But in His glory who for Sinners died.

10 From Rite and Ordinance abused they fled
To Wilds where both were utterly unknown;
But not to them had Providence foreshown
What benefits are missed, what evils bred,

In worship neither raised nor limited
 Save by Self-will. Lo! from that distant shore,
 For Rite and Ordinance, Piety is led
 Back to the Land those Pilgrims left of yore,
 Led by her own free choice. So Truth and Love

By Conscience governed do their steps retrace.—
 Fathers! your Virtues, such the power of grace,
 Their spirit, in your Children, thus approve.
 Transcendent over time, unbound by place,
 Concord and Charity in circles move.

DANIEL DEFOE

1660? - 1731

[Indentured Servants in Virginia]

from COLONEL JACQUE (1722)

The Virginia described by Defoe is a Virginia largely ignored by American writers, who have glorified the Cavaliers.¹ Defoe's Virginia is, like that of the Elizabethan dramatists, the haven of the destitute. It is not the Virginia of William Byrd, who might have referred to Defoe in Swift's fashion as "that fellow who was pilloried—I forget his name." Defoe was interested in the problem of the pauper and the criminal, and it seemed to him that America furnished the solution. Two of his novels, *Moll Flanders* and *Colonel Jacques*, both published in 1722, deal in part with Virginia. Moll's mother, a transported criminal, explains how it is possible for the unfortunate to rehabilitate themselves in Virginia:

"'When they come here,' says she, 'we make no difference [distinction]; the planters buy them, and they work together in the field, till their time is out. When 'tis expired,' said she, 'they have encouragement given them to plant for themselves; for they have a certain number of acres allotted them by the country, and they go to work to clear and cure the land, and then to plant it with tobacco and corn for their own use; and as the merchants will trust them with tools and necessities, upon the credit of their crop before it is grown, so they again plant every year a little more than the year before, and so buy whatever they want with the crop that is before them. Hence, child,' says she, 'many a Newgate-bird be-

comes a great man, and we have,' continued she, 'several justices of the peace, officers of the trained bands [militia], and magistrates of the towns they live in, that have been burnt in the hand.'"

Jack, abandoned by his parents, becomes a pick-pocket before he is old enough to know right from wrong. Later, determined to reform, he goes to Scotland and enlists. Learning that the army is actually going on a campaign, he deserts and starts back to London. At Newcastle he is kidnapped, carried to Virginia, and sold to a planter. Here at last he succeeds beyond his expectations.

We were now fellow-servants, and it was our lot to be carried up a small river or creek which falls into Potomac river, about eight miles from the great river. Here we were brought to the plantation, and put in among about fifty servants, as well negroes as others; and being delivered to the headman, or director, or manager of the plantation, he took care to let us know that we must expect to work, and very hard too; for it was for that purpose his master bought servants, and for no other. I told him, very submissively, that since it was our misfortune to come into such a miserable condition as we were in, we expected no other; only we desired we might be showed our business, and be allowed to learn it gradually, since he might be sure we had not been used to labour; and I added that when he knew particularly by what methods we were brought and betrayed into such a condition, he would perhaps see cause at least to show us that favour, if not more. This I spoke with such a

¹ See Jay B. Hubbell, "Cavalier and Indentured Servant in Virginia Fiction," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, January, 1927.

moving tone as gave him a curiosity to inquire into the particulars of our story, which I gave him at large, a little more to our advantage, too, than ordinary.

This story, as I hoped it would, did move him to a sort of tenderness; but yet he told us that his master's business must be done, and that he expected we must work as above, that he could not dispense with that upon any account whatever. Accordingly, to work we went; and indeed we had three hard things attending us; namely, we worked hard, lodged hard, and fared hard. The first I had been an utter stranger to; the last I could shift well enough with.

During this scene of life I had time to reflect on my past hours, and upon what I had done in the world; and though I had no great capacity of making a clear judgment, and very little reflections from conscience, yet it made some impressions upon me; and particularly, that I was brought into this miserable condition of a slave by some strange directing power as a punishment for the wickedness of my younger years; and this thought was increased upon the following occasion. The master whose service I was now engaged in was a man of substance and figure in the country, and had abundance of servants, as well negroes as English; in all, I think, he had near two hundred; and among so many, as some grew every year infirm and unable to work, others went off upon their time being expired, and others died; and by these and other accidents the number would diminish, if they were not often recruited and filled, and this obliged him to buy more every year.

It happened while I was here that a ship arrived from London with several servants, and among the rest was seventeen transported felons, some burnt in the hand, others not; eight of whom my master bought for the time specified in the warrant for their transportation respectively, some for a longer, some a shorter, term of years.

Our master was a great man in the country, and a justice of peace, though he seldom came down to the plantation where I was. Yet, as the new servants were brought on shore and delivered at our plantation, his worship came thither, in a kind of state, to see and receive them. When they were brought before him I was called, among other servants, as a kind of guard, to take them into custody after he had seen them, and

carry them to the work. They were brought by a guard of seamen from the ship, and the second mate of the ship came with them, and delivered them to our master, with the warrant for their transportation, as above.

When his worship had read over the warrants, he called them over by their names, one by one, and having let them know, by his reading the warrants over again to each man respectively, that he knew for what offences they were transported, he talked to every one separately very gravely; let them know how much favour they had received in being saved from the gallows, which the law had appointed for their crimes; that they were not sentenced to be transported, but to be hanged, and that transportation was granted them upon their own request and humble petition.

Then he laid before them that they ought to look upon the life they were just going to enter upon as just beginning the world again; that if they thought fit to be diligent and sober, they would, after the time they were ordered to serve was expired, be encouraged by the constitution of the country to settle and plant for themselves; and that even he himself would be so kind to them, that if he lived to see any of them serve their time faithfully out, it was his custom to assist his servants in order to their settling in that country, according as their behaviour might merit from him; and they would see and know several planters round about them who now were in very good circumstances, and who formerly were only his servants, in the same condition with them, and came from the same place—that is to say, Newgate; and some of them had the mark of it in their hands, but were now very honest men and lived in very good repute.

Among the rest of his new servants, he came to a young fellow not above seventeen or eighteen years of age, and his warrant mentions that he was, though a young man, yet an old offender; that he had been several times condemned, but had been respited or pardoned, but still he continued an incorrigible pickpocket; that the crime for which he was now transported was for picking a merchant's pocket-book, or letter-case, out of his pocket, in which was bills of exchange for a very great sum of money; that he had afterwards received the money upon some of the bills, but that going to a goldsmith in Lombard Street with another bill, and having demanded

the money, he was stopped, notice having been given of the loss of them; that he was condemned to die for the felony, and being so well known for an old offender, had certainly died, but the merchant, upon his earnest application, had obtained that he should be transported, on condition that he restored all the rest of his bills, which he had done accordingly.

Our master talked a long time to this young fellow; mentioned, with some surprise, that he so young should have followed such a wicked trade so long as to obtain the name of an old offender at so young an age; and that he should be styled incorrigible, which is to signify that notwithstanding his being whipped two or three times, and several times punished by imprisonment, and once burnt in the hand, yet nothing would do him any good, but that he was still the same. He talked mighty religiously to this boy, and told him God had not only spared him from the gallows, but had now mercifully delivered him from the opportunity of committing the same sin again, and put it in his power to live an honest life, which perhaps he knew not how to do before; and though some part of his life now might be laborious, yet he ought to look on it to be no more than being put out apprentice to an honest trade, in which, when he came out of his time, he might be able to set up for himself and live honestly.

Then he told him that while he was a servant he would have no opportunity to be dishonest; so when he came to be for himself he would have no temptation to it; and so, after a great many other kind things said to him and the rest, they were dismissed.

I was exceedingly moved at this discourse of our master's, as anybody would judge I must be, when it was directed to such a young rogue, born a thief, and bred up a pickpocket, like myself, for I thought all my master said was spoken to me, and sometimes it came into my head that sure my master was some extraordinary man, and he knew all things that ever I had done in my life.

But I was surprised to the last degree when my master, dismissing all the rest of us servants, pointed at me, and speaking to his head-clerk, "Here," says he, "bring that young fellow to me."

I had been near a year in the work, and I had plied it so well that the clerk, or headman, either

flattered me or did really believe that I behaved very well. But I was terribly frightened to hear myself called out aloud, just as they used to call for such as had done some misdemeanour, and were to be lashed or otherwise corrected.

I came in like a malefactor indeed, and thought I looked like one just taken in the fact and carried before the justice; and indeed when I came in, for I was carried into an inner room or parlour in the house to him (His discourse to the rest was in a large hall, where he sat in a seat like a lord judge upon the bench, or a petty king upon his throne), when I came in, I say, he ordered his man to withdraw, and I standing half naked and bare-headed, with my haugh, or hoe, in my hand (the posture and figure I was at in my work), near the door, he bade me lay down my hoe and come nearer. Then he began to look a little less stern and terrible than I fancied him to look before, or, perhaps, both his countenance then and before might be to my imagination differing from what they really were; for we do not always judge those things by the real temper of the person, but by the measure of our apprehensions.

"Hark ye, young man, how old are you?" says my master; and so our dialogue began.

Jacque. Indeed, sir, I don't know.

Mast. What is your name?

Jacque. They call me Colonel² here, but my name is *Jacque*, an³ 't please your worship.

Mast. But prithee, what is thy name?

Jacque. *Jacque*.

Mast. What! is thy Christian name, then, Colonel, and thy surname *Jacque*?

Jacque. Truly, sir, to tell your honour the truth, I know little or nothing of myself, nor what my true name is; but thus I have been called ever since I remember. Which is my Christian name, or which my surname, or whether I was ever christened or not, I cannot tell.

Mast. Well, however, that's honestly answered. Pray, how came you hither, and on what account are you made a servant here?

Jacque. I wish your honour could have patience with me to hear the whole story; it is the hardest and most unjust thing that ever came before you.

² I was not called Colonel *Jacque* as at London, but Colonel, and they did not know me by any other name. (Author's note.)

³ If it.

Mast. Say you so? Tell it me at large, then. I'll hear it, I promise that, if it be an hour long.

This encouraged me, and I began at being a soldier, and being persuaded to desert at Dunbar, and gave him all the particulars, as they are related above, to the time of my coming on shore and the captain talking to me about my bill after I arrived here. He held up his hands several times as I went on, expressing his abhorrence of the usage I had met with at Newcastle, and inquired the name of the master of the ship; "for," said he, "that captain, for all his smooth words, must be a rogue." So I told him his name, and the name of the ship, and he took it down in his book, and then he went on.

Mast. But pray answer me, honestly too, to another question: What was it made you so much concerned at my talking to the boy there, the pickpocket?

Jacque. An't please your honour, it moved me to hear you talk so kindly to a poor slave.

Mast. And was that all? Speak truly now.

Jacque. No, indeed; but a secret wish came into my thoughts, that you, that were so good to such a creature as that, could but one way or other know my case, and that if you did, you would certainly pity me, and do something for me.

Mast. Well, but was there nothing in his case that hit your own, that made you so affected with it; for I saw tears come from your eyes and it was that made me call to speak to you?

Jacque. Indeed, sir, I have been a wicked, idle boy, and was left desolate in the world; but that boy is a thief, and condemned to be hanged. I never was before a court of justice in my life.

Mast. Well, I won't examine you too far. If you were never before a court of justice, and are not a criminal transported, I have nothing further to inquire of you. You have been ill used, that's certain; and was it that that affected you?

Jacque. Yes, indeed, please your honour. (We all called him his honour, or his worship.)

Mast. Well, now I do know your case, what can I do for you? You speak of a bill of £94 of which you would have given the captain £40 for your liberty; have you that bill in your keeping still?

Jacque. Yes, sir; here it is.

I pulled it out of the waistband of my drawers, where I always found means to preserve it, wrapped up in a piece of paper, and pinned to

the waistband, and yet almost worn out, too, with often pinning and removing. So I gave it to him to read, and he read it.

Mast. And is this gentleman in being that gave you the bill?

Jacque. Yes, sir; he was alive and in good health when I came from London, which you may see by the date of the bill, for I came away the next day.

Mast. I do not wonder that the captain of the ship was willing to get this bill of you when you came on shore here.

Jacque. I would have given it into his possession if he would have carried me and my brother back again to England, and have taken what he asked for us out of it.

Mast. Ay; but he knew better than that, too. He knew, if you had any friends there, they would call him to an account for what he had done. But I wonder he did not take it from you while you were at sea, either by fraud or by force.

Jacque. He did not attempt that indeed.

Mast. Well, young man, I have a mind to try if I can do you any service in this case. On my word, if the money can be paid, and you can get it safe over, I might put you in a way to be a better man than your master, if you will be honest and diligent.

Jacque. As I have behaved myself in your service, sir, you will, I hope, judge of the rest.

Mast. But perhaps you hanker after returning to England?

Jacque. No, indeed, sir; if I can but get my bread honestly here, I have no mind to go to England; for I know not how to get my bread there. If I had, I had not 'listed for a soldier.

Mast. Well, but I must ask you some questions about that part hereafter; for 't is indeed something strange that you should list for a soldier when you had £94 in your pocket.

Jacque. I shall give your worship as particular account of that as I have of the other part of my life, if you please; but 't is very long.

Mast. Well, we will have that another time. But to the case in hand. Are you willing that I should send to anybody at London to talk with that gentleman that gave you the bill: not to take the money of him, but to ask him only whether he has so much money of yours in his hands, and whether he will part with it when you shall give order, and send the bill, or a duplicate of it; that is (he says) the copy? (And

it was well he did say so, for I did not understand the world duplicate all.)

Jacque Yes, sir; I will give you the bill itself, if you please. I can trust it with you, though I could not with him.

Mast. No, no, young man, I won't take it from you.

Jacque. I wish your worship would please to keep it for me, for if I should lose it, then I am quite undone.

Mast. I will keep it for you, *Jacque*, if you will; but then you shall have a note under my hand, signifying that I have it, and will return it you upon demand, which will be as safe to you as the bill. I won't take it else.

So I gave my master the bill, and he gave me his note for it; and he was a faithful steward for me, as you will hear in its place. After this conference I was dismissed, and went to my work; but about two hours after, the steward, or the overseer of the plantation, came riding by, and coming up to me as I was at work, pulled a bottle out of his pocket, and calling me to him, gave me a dram of rum. When, in good manners, I had taken but a little sup, he held it out to me again, and bade me take another, and spoke wondrous civilly to me, quite otherwise than he used to do.

This encouraged me and heartened me very much, but yet I had no particular view of anything, or which way I should have any relief.

A day or two after, when we were all going out to our work in the morning, the overseer called me to him again, and gave me a dram and a good piece of bread, and bade me come off from my work about one o'clock, and come to him to the house, for he must speak to me.

When I came to him, I came, to be sure, in the ordinary habit of a poor half-naked slave. "Come hither, young man," says he, "and give me your hoe." When I gave it him, "Well," says he, "you are to work no more in this plantation."

I looked surprised, and as if I was frightened. "What have I done, sir?" said I; "and whither am I to be sent away?"

"Nay, nay," said he, and looked very pleasantly, "do not be frightened; 't is for your good; 't is not to hurt you. I am ordered to make an overseer of you, and you shall be a slave no longer."

"Alas!" says I to him. "I an overseer! I am in no condition for it. I have no clothes to put on, no linen, nothing to help myself."

"Well, well," says he, "you may be better used than you are aware of. Come hither to me." So he led me into a vast, great warehouse, or, rather, set of warehouses, one within another, and calling the warehouse-keeper, "Here," says he, "you must clothe this man, and give him everything necessary, upon the foot of number five, and give the bill to me. Our master has ordered me to allow it in the account of the west plantation." That was, it seems, the plantation where I was to go.

Accordingly, the warehouse-keeper carried me into an inner warehouse, where were several suits of clothes of the sort his orders mentioned, which were plain but good sorts of clothes, ready made, being of a good broadcloth, about 11s. a yard in England; and with this he gave me three good shirts, two pair of shoes, stockings, and gloves, a hat, six neckcloths, and, in short, everything I could want; and when he had looked everything out, and fitted them, he lets me into a little room by itself. "Here," says he; "go in there a slave, and come out a gentleman"; and with that carried everything into the room, and, shutting the door, bid me put them on, which I did most willingly; and now you may believe that I began to hope for something better than ordinary.

In a little while after this came the overseer, and gave me joy of my new clothes, and told me I must go with him. So I was carried to another plantation, larger than that where I worked before, and where there were two overseers or clerks; one within doors, and one without. This last was removed to another plantation, and I was placed there in his room (that is to say, as the clerk without doors), and my business was to look after the servants and negroes, and take care that they did their business, provide their food, and, in short, both govern and direct them.⁴

- - The first thing he [the master] did after giving me my liberty as above, and making me an allowance, was to get the country bounty to me—that is to say, a quantity of land to begin and plant for myself.

But this he managed a way by himself, and, as I found afterwards, took up, that is, purchased in my name, about three hundred acres of land, in a more convenient place than it would have otherwise been allotted me; and

⁴ The omitted passage deals with Defoe's plan for handling slaves without the use of the lash.

this he did by his interest with the lord proprietor; so that I had an extent of ground marked out to me, not next but very near one of his own plantations. When I made my acknowledgment for this to him, he told me plainly that I was not beholden to him for it all; for he did it that I might not be obliged to neglect his business for the carrying on of my own, and on that account he would not reckon to me what money he paid, which, however, according to the custom of the country, was not a very great sum—I think about £40 or £50.

Thus he very generously gave me my liberty, advanced this money for me, put me into a plantation for myself, and gave me £30 a year wages for looking after one of his own plantations.

"But, Colonel," says he to me, "giving you this plantation is nothing at all to you if I do not assist you to support it and to carry it on, and therefore I will give you credit for whatever is needful to you for the carrying it on; such as tools, provisions for servants, and some servants to begin; materials to build out-houses, and conveniences of all sorts for the plantation, and to buy hogs, cows, horses for stock, and the like; and I'll take it out of your cargo, which will come from London, for the money of your bill."

This was highly obliging and very kind, and the more so, as it afterwards appeared. In order to this he sent two servants of his own who were carpenters. As for timber, boards, planks, and all sorts of such things, in a country almost made of wood they could not be wanting. These run me up a little wooden house in less than three weeks' time, where I had three rooms, a kitchen, an out-house, and two large sheds at a distance from the house for store-houses, almost like barns, with stables at the end of them; and thus I was set up in the world, and, in short, removed by degrees that you have heard from a pickpocket to a kidnapped, miserable slave in Virginia (for Maryland is Virginia, speaking of them at a distance); then from a slave to a head-officer or overseer of slaves, and from thence to a master-planter.

I had now, as above, a house, a stable, two warehouses, and three hundred acres of land; but, as we say, bare walls make giddy hussies, so I had neither axe nor hatchet to cut down the trees; horse, nor hog, nor cow to put upon the land; not a hoe or a spade to break ground, nor a pair of hands but my own to go to work upon.

But Heaven and kind masters make up all those things to a diligent servant; and I mention it because people who are either transported or otherwise trepanned into those places are generally thought to be rendered miserable and undone; whereas, on the contrary, I would encourage them, upon my own experience, to depend upon it, that if their own diligence in the time of service gains them but a good character, which it will certainly do if they can deserve it, there is not the poorest and most despicable felon that ever went over but may, after his time is served, begin for himself, and may in time be sure of raising a good plantation.

For example, I will now take a man in the meanest circumstances of a servant, who has served out his five or seven years. The custom of the place was then—what it is since I know not—that on his master's certifying that he had served his time out faithfully, he had fifty acres of land allotted him for planting, and on this plan he begins.

Some had a horse, a cow, and three hogs given, or rather lent, them, as a stock for the land, which they made an allowance for at a certain time and rate.

Custom has made it a trade to give credit to such beginners as these for tools, clothes, nails, ironwork, and other things necessary for their planting, and which the persons so giving credit to them are to be paid for out of the crop of tobacco which they shall plant. Nor is it in the debtors' power to defraud the creditor of payment in that manner; and as tobacco is their coin as well as their product, so all things are to be purchased at a certain quantity of tobacco, the price being so rated.

Thus the naked planter has credit at his beginning, and immediately goes to work to cure the land and plant tobacco; and from this little beginning have some of the most considerable planters in Virginia and Maryland also, raised themselves—namely, from being without a hat or a shoe to estates of £40,000 or £50,000; and in this method, I may add, no diligent man ever miscarried, if he had health to work and was a good husband; for he every year increases a little, and every year adding more land and planting more tobacco, which is real money, he must gradually increase in substance, till at length he gets enough to buy negroes and other servants, and then never works himself any more.

In a word, every Newgate wretch, every desperate forlorn creature, the most despicable ruined man in the world, has here a fair opportunity put into his hands to begin the world again, and that upon a foot of certain gain and

in a method exactly honest, with a reputation that nothing past will have any effect upon; and innumerable people have raised themselves from the worst circumstances in the world—namely, from the cells in Newgate.

GEORGE BERKELEY

1685 - 1753

VERSES ON THE PROSPECT OF PLANTING ARTS AND LEARN- ING IN AMERICA

(1726?; 1752)

The poem given here was written by the eighteenth-century philosopher George Berkeley, Dean of Derry and later Bishop of Cloyne. He lived in Rhode Island from January, 1729, until the autumn of 1731. He had come to America hoping to establish in the Bermudas or elsewhere a college for the promotion of religion and learning in the New World. He obtained from Parliament a grant of £20,000, which the English Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole, was unwilling to spend on what seemed to him a quixotic project. While in America, Berkeley wrote *Alciphron*, one of his best works. In this dialogue Berkeley is Euphranor, the philosophic farmer. Crito in the same dialogue is his American disciple, Samuel Johnson, founder of King's College (now Columbia University) and a philosophic writer of some importance. In Berkeley's works are included some notes of sermons delivered in New England. A. C. Fraser, Berkeley's biographer and editor, calls attention to Berkeley's "delicate criticism of New England life at the time; its often petty sectarianism and puritanic rigidity in minor morals; its vices of a sort apt to beset a grave and temperate people; detraction, which would not steal a sixpence, but would rob a neighbour of his reputation; without relish for wine, yet with itching ears for scandal; . . ." In *An Essay towards Preventing the Ruin of Great Britain* (1721) Berkeley had expressed a pessimistic view of the future of England: "The truth is, our symptoms are so bad that, notwithstanding all the care and vigi-

lance of the legislature, it is to be feared the final period of our State approaches."

The Muse, disgusted at an age and clime
Barren of every glorious theme,
In distant lands now waits a better time,
Producing subjects worthy fame:

5 In happy climes, where from the genial sun
And virgin earth such scenes ensue,
The force of art by nature seems outdone,
And fancied beauties by the true:

10 In happy climes, the seat of innocence,
Where nature guides and virtue rules,
Where men shall not impose for truth and sense
The pedantry of courts and schools:

15 There shall be sung another golden age,
The rise of empire and of arts,
The good and great inspiring epic rage,
The wisest heads and noblest hearts.

20 Not such as Europe breeds in her decay;
Such as she bred when fresh and young,
When heavenly flame did animate her clay,
By future poets shall be sung.

25 Westward the course of empire takes its way;
The first four Acts already past,
A fifth shall close the Drama with the day;
Time's noblest offspring is the last.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

1730 - 1774

Readers of Irving's delightful life of Goldsmith will recall the story of how as a young man he set off for Cork with thirty pounds in his pocket and mounted on a fine horse, determined to sail for America, and returned somewhat later, all his money gone, mounted on a sorry little pony which he had named Fiddle-back. The mature Goldsmith did not look favorably upon the enlarging stream of emigrants bound for America. In an essay, "Thoughts upon the Present Situation of Affairs," published in the *Lady's Magazine* for October, 1761 (see Ronald S. Crane, *New Essays by Oliver Goldsmith*, 1927), Goldsmith wrote:

"To be as explicit as possible, I see no reason why we should aggrandize our colonies at our own expense; an acquisition of new colonies is useless, unless they are peopled; but to people those deserts that lie behind our present colonies, would require multitudes from the mother-country, and I do not find we are too populous at home. All that are willing or able to work in England whether men or women, can live happy, and those who are neither able nor willing, would starve on the banks of the Ohio, as well as in the streets of St. Giles's; it is not the lazy or the maimed that are wanted to people colonies abroad, but the healthy and industrious, and such members of society, I think, would be more usefully kept at home."

Goldsmith's knowledge of America, it will soon be apparent, was inaccurate. Note that to scan the lines properly, one must mispronounce Niagara and Altama (Altamaha).

from THE TRAVELLER (1764)

Have we not seen, round Britain's peopled
shore,
Her useful sons exchanged for useless ore?
Seen all her triumphs but destruction haste,
Like flaring tapers brightening as they waste;
Seen Opulence, her grandeur to maintain,
Lead stern Depopulation in her train,
And over fields where scattered hamlets rose,
In barren solitary pomp repose?
Have we not seen at Pleasure's lordly call,
The smiling long-frequented village fall?
Beheld the duteous son, the sire decayed,

• 904 •

The modest matron, and the blushing maid,
Forced from their homes, a melancholy train,
To traverse climes beyond the western main;
Where wild Oswego spreads her swamps around,
5 And Niagara stuns with thund'ring sound?
Even now, perhaps, as there some pilgrim
strays
Through tangled forests, and through dangerous
ways;
10 Where beasts with man divided empire claim,
And the brown Indian marks with murderous
aim;
There, while above the giddy tempest flies,

And all around distressful yells arise,
The pensive exile, bending with his woe,
To stop too fearful, and too faint to go,
Casts a long look where England's glories shine,
And bids his bosom sympathize with mine.

from THE DESERTED VILLAGE (1770)

Ah, no! To distant climes, a dreary scene,
Where half the convex world intrudes between,
Through torried tracts with fainting steps they
go,
Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe.
Far different there from all that charmed before,
The various terrors of that horrid shore;
Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,

And fiercely shed intolerable day;
Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling;
Those poisonous fields with rank luxuriance
5 crowned,
Where the dark scorpion gathers death around;
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake;
Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey,
10 And savage men more murderous still than they;
While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
Mingling the ravaged landscape with the skies.
Far different these from every former scene,
The cooling brook, the grassy-vested green,
15 The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
That only sheltered thefts of harmless love.

II. The Revolutionary Period, 1765-1789

EDMUND BURKE

1729 - 1797

from ON CONCILIATION WITH
AMERICA
(1775)

Burke, probably the finest of all political writers in the English language, was one of the few friends of America in the British Parliament. His great oration, "On Conciliation with America," was delivered on March 22, 1775, the day before Patrick Henry's "Give me liberty, or give me death" speech in Virginia. Burke's speech was formerly widely read in American high schools, but it yields much more to the mature than to the adolescent mind. The finest American tribute to Burke is probably Woodrow Wilson's essay, "The Interpreter of English Liberty"

As to the wealth which the colonies have drawn from the sea by their fisheries, you had all that matter fully opened at your bar. You surely thought these acquisitions of value, for they seemed even to excite your envy; and yet the spirit by which that enterprising employment has been exercised ought rather, in my opinion, to have raised your esteem and admiration. And pray, Sir, what in the world is equal to it? Pass by the other parts, and look at the manner in which the people of New England have of late carried on the whale fishery. Whilst we follow them among the tumbling mountains of ice, and behold them penetrating into the deepest frozen recesses of Hudson's Bay and Davis's Straits, whilst we are looking for them

beneath the arctic circle, we hear that they have pierced into the opposite region of polar cold, that they are at the antipodes, and engaged under the frozen serpent of the south. Falkland Island, which seemed too remote and romantic an object for the grasp of national ambition, is but a stage and resting-place in the progress of their victorious industry. Nor is the equinoctial heat more discouraging to them than the accumulated winter of both the poles. We know that whilst some of them draw the line and strike the harpoon on the coast of Africa, others run the longitude and pursue their gigantic game along the coast of Brazil. No sea but what is vexed by their fisheries. No climate that is not witness to their toils. Neither the perseverance of Holland, nor the activity of France, nor the dexterous and firm sagacity of English enterprise ever carried this most perilous mode of hard industry to the extent to which it has been pushed by this recent people—a people who are still, as it were, but in the gristle, and not yet hardened into the bone of manhood. When I contemplate these things, when I know that the colonies in general owe little or nothing to any care of ours, and that they are not squeezed into this happy form by the constraints of watchful and suspicious government, but that, through a wise and salutary neglect, a generous nature has been suffered to take her own

way to perfection; when I reflect upon these effects, when I see how profitable they have been to us, I feel all the pride of power sink, and all presumption in the wisdom of human contrivances melt and die away within me. My rigour relents. I pardon something to the spirit of liberty.

I am sensible, Sir, that all which I have asserted in my detail, is admitted in the gross, but that quite a different conclusion is drawn from it. America, gentlemen say, is a noble object. It is an object well worth fighting for. Certainly it is, if fighting a people be the best way of gaining them. Gentlemen in this respect will be led to their choice of means by their complexions and their habits. Those who understand the military art will of course have some predilection for it. Those who wield the thunder of the state may have more confidence in the efficacy of arms. But I confess, possibly for want of this knowledge, my opinion is much more in favour of prudent management than of force, considering force not as an odious, but a feeble instrument for preserving a people so numerous, so active, so growing, so spirited as this in a profitable and subordinate connection with us.

First, Sir, permit me to observe that the use of force alone is but *temporary*. It may subdue for a moment, but it does not remove the necessity of subduing again; and a nation is not governed which is perpetually to be conquered.

My next objection is its *uncertainty*. Terror is not always the effect of force, and an armament is not a victory. If you do not succeed, you are without recourse; for, conciliation failing, force remains, but, force failing, no further hope of reconciliation is left. Power and authority are sometimes bought by kindness, but they can never be begged as alms by an impoverished and defeated violence.

A further objection to force is, that you *impair the object* by your very endeavours to preserve it. The thing you fought for is not the thing which you recover, but depreciated, sunk, wasted, and consumed in the contest. Nothing less will content me than *whole America*. I do not choose to consume its strength along with our own, because in all parts it is the British strength that I consume. I do not choose to be caught by a foreign enemy at the end of this exhausting conflict; and still less in the midst of

it. I may escape, but I can make no assurance against such an event. Let me add, that I do not choose wholly to break the American spirit, because it is the spirit that has made the country.

Lastly, we have no sort of *experience* in favour of force as an instrument in the rule of our colonies. Their growth and their utility has been owing to methods altogether different. Our ancient indulgence has been said to be pursued to a fault. It may be so. But we know, if feeling is evidence, that our fault was more tolerable than our attempt to mend it, and our sin far more salutary than our penitence.

These, Sir, are my reasons for not entertaining that high opinion of untried force by which many gentlemen, for whose sentiments in other particulars I have great respect, seem to be so greatly captivated. But there is still behind a third consideration concerning this object, which serves to determine my opinion on the sort of policy which ought to be pursued in the management of America, even more than its population and its commerce—I mean its *temper and character*.

In this character of the Americans, a love of freedom is the predominating feature which marks and distinguishes the whole; and as an ardent is always a jealous affection, your colonies become suspicious, restive, and untractable whenever they see the least attempt to wrest from them by force or shuffle from them by chicane what they think the only advantage worth living for. This fierce spirit of liberty is stronger in the English colonies probably than in any other people of the earth; and this from a great variety of powerful causes, which, to understand the true temper of their minds and the direction which this spirit takes, it will not be amiss to lay open somewhat more largely.

First, the people of the colonies are descendants of Englishmen. England, Sir, is a nation which still I hope respects, and formerly adored, her freedom. The colonists emigrated from you when this part of your character was most predominant, and they took this bias and direction the moment they parted from your hands. They are therefore not only devoted to liberty, but to liberty according to English ideas and on English principles. Abstract liberty, like other mere abstractions, is not to be found. Liberty inheres in some sensible object; and every nation has

formed to itself some favourite point, which by way of eminence becomes the criterion of their happiness. It happened you know, Sir, that the great contests for freedom in this country were from the earliest times chiefly upon the question of taxing. Most of the contests in the ancient commonwealths turned primarily on the right of election of magistrates, or on the balance among the several orders of the state. The question of money was not with them so immediate. But in England it was otherwise. On this point of taxes the ablest pens and most eloquent tongues have been exercised; the greatest spirits have acted and suffered. In order to give the fullest satisfaction concerning the importance of this point, it was not only necessary for those who in argument defended the excellence of the English constitution to insist on this privilege of granting money as a dry point of fact, and to prove that the right had been acknowledged in ancient parchments and blind usages to reside in a certain body called a House of Commons. They went much further; they attempted to prove, and they succeeded, that in theory it ought to be so, from the particular nature of a House of Commons, as an immediate representative of the people, whether the old records had delivered this oracle or not. They took infinite pains to inculcate, as a fundamental principle, that in all monarchies the people must in effect themselves, mediately or immediately, possess the power of granting their own money, or no shadow of liberty could subsist. The colonies draw from you, as with their life-blood, these ideas and principles. Their love of liberty, as with you, fixed and attached on this specific point of taxing. Liberty might be safe or might be endangered in twenty other particulars, without their being much pleased or alarmed. Here they felt its pulse, and as they found that beat they thought themselves sick or sound. I do not say whether they were right or wrong in applying your general arguments to their own case. It is not easy indeed to make a monopoly of theorems and corollaries. The fact is, that they did thus apply those general arguments; and your mode of governing them, whether through lenity or indolence, through wisdom or mistake, confirmed them in the imagination that they, as well as you, had an interest in these common principles.

They were further confirmed in this pleasing

error by the form of their provincial legislative assemblies. Their governments are popular in a high degree, some are merely popular, in all the popular representative is the most weighty, and this share of the people in their ordinary government never fails to inspire them with lofty sentiments and with a strong aversion from whatever tends to deprive them of their chief importance.

If anything were wanting to this necessary operation of the form of government, religion would have given it a complete effect. Religion, always a principle of energy, in this new people is no way worn out or impaired, and their mode of professing it is also one main cause of this free spirit. The people are Protestants, and of that kind which is the most adverse to all implicit submission of mind and opinion. This is a persuasion not only favourable to liberty, but built upon it. I do not think, Sir, that the reason of this averseness in the dissenting churches, from all that looks like absolute government, is so much to be sought in their religious tenets as in their history. Every one knows that the Roman Catholic religion is at least coeval with most of the governments where it prevails, that it has generally gone hand in hand with them, and received great favour and every kind of support from authority. The Church of England, too, was formed from her cradle under the nursing care of regular government. But the dissenting interests have sprung up in direct opposition to all the ordinary powers of the world, and could justify that opposition only on a strong claim to natural liberty. Their very existence depended on the powerful and unre-mitted assertion of that claim. All Protestantism, even the most cold and passive, is a sort of dissent. But the religion most prevalent in our northern colonies is a refinement on the principle of resistance; it is the dissidence of dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion. This religion, under a variety of denominations agreeing in nothing but in the communion of the spirit of liberty, is predominant in most of the northern provinces, where the Church of England, notwithstanding its legal rights, is in reality no more than a sort of private sect, not composing most probably the tenth of the people. The colonists left England when this spirit was high, and in the emigrants was the highest of all; and even that stream of foreign-

ers, which has been constantly flowing into these colonies, has, for the greatest part, been composed of dissenters from the establishments of their several countries, and have brought with them a temper and character far from alien to that of the people with whom they mixed.

Sir, I can perceive by their manner that some gentlemen object to the latitude of this description, because in the southern colonies the Church of England forms a large body and has a regular establishment. It is certainly true. There is, however, a circumstance attending these colonies which, in my opinion, fully counterbalances this difference, and makes the spirit of liberty still more high and haughty than in those to the northward. It is, that in Virginia and the Carolinas they have a vast multitude of slaves. Where this is the case in any part of the world, those who are free are by far the most proud and jealous of their freedom. Freedom is to them not only an enjoyment, but a kind of rank and privilege. Not seeing there that freedom, as in countries where it is a common blessing and as broad and general as the air, may be united with much abject toil, with great misery, with all the exterior of servitude, liberty looks amongst them like something that is more noble and liberal. I do not mean, Sir, to commend the superior morality of this sentiment, which has at least as much pride as virtue in it; but I cannot alter the nature of man. The fact is so; and these people of the southern colonies are much more strongly, and with a higher and more stubborn spirit, attached to liberty than those to the northward. Such were all the ancient commonwealths, such were our Gothic ancestors, such in our days were the Poles, and such will be all masters of slaves who are not slaves themselves. In such a people, the haughtiness of domination combines with the spirit of freedom, fortifies it, and renders it invincible.

Permit me, Sir, to add another circumstance in our colonies, which contributes no mean part towards the growth and effect of this untractable spirit. I mean their education. In no country perhaps in the world is the law so general a study. The profession itself is numerous and powerful, and in most provinces it takes the lead. The greater number of the deputies sent to the congress were lawyers. But all who read, and most do read, endeavour to obtain some smattering in that science. I have been told by an

eminent bookseller that in no branch of his business, after tracts of popular devotion, were so many books as those on the law exported to the plantations. The colonists have now fallen into the way of printing them for their own use. I hear that they have sold nearly as many of Blackstone's Commentaries in America as in England. General Gage marks out this disposition very particularly in a letter on your table. He states that all the people in his government are lawyers, or smatterers in law, and that in Boston they have been enabled, by successful chicane, wholly to evade many parts of your capital penal constitutions. The smartness of debate will say, that this knowledge ought to teach them more clearly the rights of legislature, their obligations to obedience, and the penalties of rebellion. All this is mighty well. But my honourable and learned friend [the Attorney-General] on the floor, who condescends to mark what I say for animadversion, will disdain that ground. He has heard, as well as I, that when great honours and great emoluments do not win over this knowledge to the service of the state, it is a formidable adversary to government. If the spirit be not tamed and broken by these happy methods, it is stubborn and litigious. *Abeunt studia in mores*. This study renders men acute, inquisitive, dexterous, prompt in attack, ready in defence, full of resources. In other countries, the people, more simple and of a less mercurial cast, judge of an ill principle in government only by an actual grievance; here they anticipate the evil and judge of the pressure of the grievance by the badness of the principle. They augur misgovernment at a distance, and snuff the approach of tyranny in every tainted breeze.

The last cause of this disobedient spirit in the colonies is hardly less powerful than the rest, as it is not merely moral, but deep laid in the natural constitution of things. Three thousand miles of ocean lie between you and them. No contrivance can prevent the effect of this distance in weakening government. Seas roll, and months pass, between the order and the execution, and the want of a speedy explanation of a single point is enough to defeat a whole system. You have, indeed, winged ministers of vengeance, who carry your bolts in their pounces to the remotest verge of the sea. But there a power steps in that limits the arrogance of rag-

ing passions and furious elements, and says, "So far shalt thou go, and no farther" Who are you, that should fret and rage and bite the chains of nature? Nothing worse happens to you than does to all nations who have extensive empire; and it happens in all the forms into which empire can be thrown. In large bodies, the circulation of power must be less vigorous at the extremities. Nature has said it. The Turk cannot govern Egypt, and Arabia, and Kurdistan, as he governs Thrace, nor has he the same dominion in Crimea and Algiers which he has at Brusa and Smyrna. Despotism itself is obliged to truck and huckster. The Sultan gets such obedience as he can. He governs with a loose reign that he may govern at all; and the whole of the force and vigour of his authority in his centre is derived from a prudent relaxation in all his bor-

ders. Spain, in her provinces, is, perhaps, not so well obeyed as you are in yours. She complies, too, she submits, she watches times. This is the immutable condition, the eternal law, of extensive and detached empire.

Then, Sir, from these six capital sources: of descent, of form of government, of religion in the northern provinces, of manners in the southern, of education, of the remoteness of situation from the first mover of government—from all these causes a fierce spirit of liberty has grown up. It has grown with the growth of the people in your colonies, and increased with the increase of their wealth; a spirit that unhappily meeting with an exercise of power in England which, however lawful, is not reconcilable to any ideas of liberty, much less with theirs, has kindled this flame that is ready to consume us.

JANET SCHAW

[The North Carolina Revolutionists]

from JOURNAL OF A LADY OF
QUALITY

*Being the Narrative of a Journey from
Scotland to the West Indies, North Carolina,
and Portugal, in the years 1774 to 1776**
(1775; 1921)

In 1921 Professor and Mrs. Charles McLean Andrews published, from a manuscript in the British Museum, Janet Schaw's entertaining account of her travels to the New World. They conjecture that at the time of her American voyage she was thirty-five or forty years old. It is not known when she died. Her view of the Revolution is very far from the orthodox view of popular American histories. The Loyalists were undoubtedly badly treated in many places. To the cultivated Scotch lady, the Revolutionists had no real grievance; and the methods by

which "rag, tag, and bob-tail" were induced to join the militia were contemptible. She was visiting a brother, who lived in the neighborhood of Wilmington, North Carolina. This *Journal*, as its editors state, "valuable as it undoubtedly is as history, claims recognition for itself also as a literary and human document, and places its author among the litterateurs of her country and century."

Janet Schaw's opinion of the American Revolutionists was not quite so unfavorable as that of Samuel Johnson, who said: "Sir, they are a race of convicts, and ought to be thankful for any thing we allow them short of hanging," and again: "I am willing to love all mankind, *except an American*." One must not forget Burke's magnificent speech on *Conciliation*, delivered before Parliament the day before Patrick Henry made his famous speech. A minor English poet, Thomas Day, published in 1777 "The Desolation of America," a passionate protest against the Revolutionary War. Referring to the revolting Colonists, he said:

*"Not these, the boast of Gallia's proud domains,
Nor the scorched squadrons of Iberian plains;*

* Reprinted by permission of the Yale University Press and of the editors, Professor and Mrs. C. M. Andrews.

*Unhappy men! no foreign war you wage,
In your own blood you glut your frantic rage;
And while you follow where oppression leads,
At every step, a friend, or brother, bleeds."*

WILMINGTON

Good heavens! what a scene this town is: Surely you folks at home have adopted the old maxim of King Charles. "Make friends of your foes, leave friends to shift for themselves."

We came down in the morning in time for the review, which the heat made as terrible to the spectators as to the soldiers, or what you please to call them. They had certainly fainted under it, had not the constant draughts of grog supported them. Their exercise was that of bush-fighting, but it appeared so confused and so perfectly different from any thing I ever saw, I cannot say whether they performed it well or not; but this I know that they were heated with rum till capable of committing the most shocking outrages. We stood in the balcony of Doctor Cobham's house and they were reviewed on a field mostly covered with what are called here scrubby oaks, which are only a little better than brushwood. They at last however assembled on the plain field, and I must really laugh while I recollect their figures: 2000 men in their shirts and trousers, preceded by a very ill beat-drum and a fiddler, who was also in his shirt with a long sword and a cue at his hair, who played with all his might. They made indeed a most unmartial appearance. But the worst figure there can shoot from behind a bush and kill even a General Wolfe.

Before the review was over, I heard a cry of tar and feather. I was ready to faint at the idea of this dreadful operation. I would have gladly quitted the balcony, but was so much afraid the Victim was one of my friends, that I was not able to move; and he indeed proved to be one, tho' in a humble station. For it was Mr Neilson's poor English groom. You can hardly conceive what I felt when I saw him dragged forward, poor devil, frightened out of his wits. However at the request of some of the officers, who had been Neilson's friends, his punishment was changed into that of mounting on a table and begging pardon for having smiled at the reg^t. He was then drummed and fiddled out of the town, with a strict prohibition of ever being seen in it again.

One might have expected, that tho' I had been imprudent all my life, the present occasion might have inspired me with some degree of caution, and yet I can tell you I had almost incurred the poor groom's fate from my own folly. Several of the officers came up to dine, amongst others Coll: Howe, who with less ceremony than might have been expected from his general politeness stepped into an apartment adjoining the hall, and took up a book I had been reading, which he brought open in his hand into the company. I was piqued at his freedom, and reproved him with a half compliment to his general good breeding. He owned his fault and with much gallantry promised to submit to whatever punishment I would inflict. You shall only, said I, read aloud a few pages which I will point out, and I am sure you will do Shakespear justice. He bowed and took the book, but no sooner observed that I had turned up for him, that part of Henry the fourth,¹ where Falstaff describes his company, than he coloured like Scarlet. I saw he made the application instantly; however he read it thro', tho' not with the vivacity he generally speaks; however he recovered himself and coming close up to me, whispered, you will certainly get yourself tarred and feathered, shall

¹ Miss Schaw may possibly refer to *II Henry IV*, Act III, Scene II, but more probably she had in mind *I Henry IV*, Act IV, Scene II, which reads in part:

"If I be not ashamed of my soldiers, I am a soused gurnet. I have misused the king's press damnably, I have got, in exchange of a hundred and fifty soldiers, three hundred and odd pounds. . . . and now my whole charge consists of ancients, corporals, lieutenants, gentlemen of companies, slaves as ragged as Lazarus in the painted cloth, where the glutton's dogs licked his sores, and such as indeed were never soldiers, but discarded unjust serving-men, younger sons to younger brothers, revolted tapsters, and ostlers trade-fallen; the cankers of a calm world and a long peace, ten times more dishonourable ragged than an old faced ancient: and such have I, to fill up the rooms of them that have bought out their services, that you would think that I had a hundred and fifty tattered prodigals lately come from swine-keeping, from eating draff and husks. A mad fellow met me on the way and told me I had unloaded all the gibbets and pressed the dead bodies. No eye hath seen such scarecrows. . . . There's but a shirt and a half in all my company; and the half shirt is two napkins tacked together and thrown over the shoulders like a herald's coat without sleeves; and the shirt, to say the truth, stolen from my host at Saint Alban's, or the red-nose innkeeper of Daventry. But that's all one; they'll find linen enough on every hedge."

I apply to be executioner? I am going to seal this up. Adieu.

I closed my last packet at Doctor Cobham's after the review, and as I hoped to hear of some method of getting it sent to you, stayed, tho' Miss Rutherford was obliged to go home. As soon as she was gone, I went into the town, the entry of which I found closed up by a detachment of the soldiers; but as the officer immediately made way for me, I took no further notice of it, but advanced to the middle of the street, where I found a number of the first people in town standing together, who (to use Milton's phrase) seemed much impassioned. As most of them were my acquaintances, I stopped to speak to them, but they with one voice begged me for heaven's sake to get off the street, making me observe they were prisoners, adding that every avenue of the town was shut up, and that in all human probability some scene would be acted very unfit for me to witness. I could not take the friendly advice, for I became unable to move and absolutely petrified with horror.

Observing however an officer with whom I had just dined, I beckoned him to me. He came, but with no very agreeable look, and on my asking him what was the matter, he presented a paper he had folded in his hand. If you will persuade them to sign this they are at liberty, said he, but till then must remain under this guard, as they must suffer the penalties they have justly incurred. "And we will suffer every thing," replied one of them, "before we abjure our king, our country and our principles." "This, Ladies," said he turning to me, who was now joined by several Ladies, "is what they call their Test, but by what authority this Gentleman forces it on us, we are yet to learn." "There is my Authority," pointing to the Soldiers with the most insolent air, "dispute it, if you can." Oh Britannia, what are you doing, while your true obedient sons are thus insulted by their unlawful brethren; are they also forgot by their natural parents?

- - - At present the martial law stands thus: An officer or committeeman enters a plantation with his posse. The Alternative is proposed, Agree to join us, and your persons and properties are safe; you have a shilling sterling a day; your duty is no more than once a month appearing under Arms at Wilmingtown, which will prove only a merrymaking, where you will have as much grog as you can drink. But if you refuse, we are directly to cut up your corn, shoot your pigs, burn your houses, seize your Negroes and perhaps tar and feather yourself. Not to chuse the first requires more courage than they are possessed of, and I believe this method has seldom failed with the lower sort. No sooner do they appear under arms on the stated day, than they are harangued by their officers with the implacable cruelty of the king of Great Britain, who has resolved to murder and destroy man, wife and child, and that he has sworn before God and his parliament that he will not spare one of them; and thus those deluded people believe more firmly than their creed, and who is it that is bold enough to venture to undeceive them? The King's proclamation² they never saw; but are told it was ordering the tories to murder the whigs, and promising every Negro that would murder his Master and family that he should have his Master's plantation. This last Artifice they may pay for, as the Negroes have got it amongst them and believe it to be true. Tis ten to one they may try the experiment, and in that case friends and foes will be all one.

² By "King's proclamation," Miss Schaw means the proclamation issued by Governor Gage of Massachusetts, Boston, June 12, 1775, as a broadside, offering "His most gracious Majesty's pardon to all persons who shall forthwith lay down their arms and return to the duties of peaceable subjects, excepting only from the benefits of such pardon, Samuel Adams and John Hancock," etc. It corresponds to a similar pardon issued by Clinton offering amnesty to all in North Carolina, except Harnett and Howe. Martin calls Gage's proclamation "a proclamation of the King" and it was generally so interpreted. (Editors' note.)

ALFRED TENNYSON

1809 - 1892

ENGLAND AND AMERICA IN 1782

(1872)

"It was," says Professor S. E. MORISON, "an unconscious mission of the United States to make explicit what had long been implicit in the British Constitution, and to prove the value of principles that had largely been forgotten in the England of George III." In the nineteenth century Englishmen came to a new understanding of Washington and Jefferson as well as of Cromwell and Hampden. The date, 1782, in Tennyson's title seems to be an error for 1783, the year of the Treaty of Paris, or 1781, the year of Cornwallis's surrender.

O thou, that sendest out the man
To rule by land and sea,
Strong mother of a Lion-line,
Be proud of those strong sons of thine
Who wrench'd their rights from thee!

What wonder, if in noble heat
Those men thine arms withstood,
Retaught the lesson thou hadst taught,
And in thy spirit with thee fought—
5 Who sprang from English blood!

But Thou rejoice with liberal joy,
Lift up thy rocky face,
And shatter, when the storms are black,
10 In many a streaming torrent back,
The seas that shock thy base!

Whatever harmonies of law
The growing world assume,
15 Thy work is thine—The single note
From that deep chord which Hampden
smote
Will vibrate to the doom.

III. Nationalism and Romanticism, 1789-1830

*O thou that sendest out the man
To rule by land and sea,
Strong mother of a Lion-line,
Be proud of those strong sons of thine
Who wrench'd their rights from thee!*

So Tennyson wrote nearly a century after Yorktown. At the close of the Revolution, however, England had no such feeling for the new United States. "Neither she nor the rest of the old world," says Professor S. E. Morison, "expected much of the American experiment; and outside France only an occasional philosopher wished it well." Until well after the War of 1812 the British popular attitude continued scornful and supercilious. There are important exceptions, however, chiefly among the Romantic poets. Neither war nor ill feeling could break off intellectual ties which bound the two countries together.¹

¹ Certain studies made by American scholars enable one to understand the cultural and literary relations between America and England: W. B. Cairns, *British Criticisms of American Writers, 1783-1815* (1918) and *British Criticisms of American Writers, 1815-1833* (1922); Jane L. Mesick, *The English Traveller in America, 1780-1835* (1922); Allan Nevins, *American Social History as Recorded by British Travellers* (1923); Robert E. Spiller, *The American in England during the First Half Century of Independence* (1926); and Clarence Gohdes, *American Literature in Nineteenth-Century England* (1944).

THOMAS MOORE

1779 - 1852

The supercilious attitude is well represented by Thomas Moore, the Irish poet, who visited the United States in 1804 on his way home from Bermuda. One may trace his journey and his reactions to America in several poems and in letters written to his mother. He wrote to her from Baltimore, June 13, 1804:

"I am now, dearest mother, more than three hundred miles from Norfolk [where we had landed]. I have passed the Potomac, the Rappahannock, the Occoquan, the Potapsio, and many other rivers, with names as barbarous as the inhabitants: every step I take not only *reconciles*, but *endears* to me, not only the excellencies but even the errors of Old England. - - - The mail takes twelve passengers, which generally consist of squalling children, stinking negroes, and republicans smoking cigars! How often it has occurred to me that nothing can be more emblematic of the *government* of this country than its *stages*, filled with a motley mixture, all 'hail fellow well met,' driving through mud and filth, which *bespatters* them as they *raise* it, and risking an *upset* at every step."

Only in Philadelphia, in Joseph Dennie's undemocratic circle, did Moore find congenial companions. He wrote to his mother, June 26, 1804:

"My reception at Philadelphia was extremely flattering: it is the only place in America which can boast any literary society, and my name had prepossessed them more strongly than I deserve. But their affectionate attentions went far beyond this deference to reputation; I was quite caressed while there; and their anxiety to make me known, by introductory letters, to all their friends on my way, and two or three little poems of a very flattering kind, which some of their choicest men addressed to me, all went so warmly to my heart; that I felt quite a regret in leaving them; and the only place I have seen, which I had one wish to pause in, was Philadelphia."

No Romantic poet, however, could remain wholly indifferent to the beauties of American scenery. From Saratoga, New York, Moore wrote to his mother on July 10, 1804:

"I never can forget the scenery of this country, and if it had but any endearing associations of the heart (to diffuse that charm over it, without which the fairest features of nature are but faintly interesting), I should regret very keenly that I cannot renew often the enjoyment of its beauties. But it has none such for me, and I defy the barbarous natives to forge one chain of attachment for my heart that has ever felt the sweets of delicacy and refinement. I believe I must except the *women* from this denunciation."

ENGLISH WRITERS-----ON AMERICA

The best known of Moore's American poems is his ballad, "The Lake of the Dismal Swamp." Much more characteristic, however, is the poem given in part below.

from TO THE HONOURABLE W. R.
SPENCER. FROM BUFFALO, UPON
LAKE ERIE

(1804)

Nec venit ad duos, musa vocata Getas.¹

Ovid, *ex Ponto*, lib. i. ep. 5.

- - - All that creation's varying mass assumes
Of grand or lovely, here aspires and blooms;
Bold rise the mountains, rich the gardens glow;
Bright lakes expand, and conquering rivers flow;
But mind, immortal mind, without whose ray,
This world's a wilderness and man but clay,
Mind, mind alone, in barren, still repose,
Nor blooms, nor rises, nor expands, nor flows.
Take Christians, Mohawks, democrats, and all
From the rude wig-wam to the congress-hall,
From man the savage, whether slav'd or free,
To man the civiliz'd, less tame than he,—
'Tis one dull chaos, one unfertile strife
Betwixt half-polish'd and half barbarous life;
Where every ill the ancient world could brew
Is mix'd with every grossness of the new;
Where all corrupts, though little can entice,
And nought is known of luxury, but its vice!

Is this the region then, is this the clime²
For soaring fancies? for those dreams sublime,
Which all their miracles of light reveal
To heads that meditate and hearts that feel?
Alas! not so—the Muse of Nature lights
Her glories round; she scales the mountain
heights,

And roams the forests; every wondrous spot
Burns with her step, yet man regards it not.
She whispers round, her words are in the air,
But lost, unheard, they linger freezing there,

¹ Nor does the muse when called come to the
savage Goths.

² Was Moore maliciously echoing Satan's speech in
Paradise Lost, Book I?

"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"
Said then the lost Archangel, "this the seat
That we must change for Heaven? . . ."

Without one breath of soul, divinely strong,
One ray of mind to thaw them into song.

Yet, yet forgive me, oh ye sacred few,
5 Whom late by Delaware's green banks I knew;
Whom, known and lov'd through many a social
eve,

'Twas bliss to live with, and 'twas pain to leave.³
Not with more joy the lonely exile scann'd
10 The writing trac'd upon the desert's sand,
Where his lone heart but little hop'd to find
One trace of life, one stamp of human kind,
Than did I hail the pure, th' enlighten'd zeal,
The strength to reason and the warmth to feel,
15 The manly polish and the illumin'd taste,
Which,—'mid the melancholy, heartless waste
My foot has travers'd,—oh you sacred few!
I found by Delaware's green banks with you.

20 Long may you loathe the Gallic dross that runs
Through your fair country and corrupts its sons;
Long love the arts, the glories which adorn
Those fields of freedom, where your sires were
born.

25 Oh! if America can yet be great,
If neither chain'd by choice, nor doom'd by
fate

To the mob-mania which imbrutes her now,
She yet can raise the crown'd, yet civic brow
30 Of single majesty,—can add the grace

³ In the society of Mr. Dennie and his friends, at
Philadelphia, I passed the few agreeable moments
which my tour through the States afforded me. Mr.
Dennie has succeeded in diffusing through this cul-
35 tivated little circle that love for good literature and
sound politics, which he feels so zealously himself,
and which is so very rarely the characteristic of his
countrymen. They will not, I trust, accuse me of
illiberality for the picture which I have given of the
ignorance and corruption that surround them. If I
did not hate, as I ought, the rabble to which they are
opposed, I could not value, as I do, the spirit with
which they defy it; and in learning from them what
Americans *can be*, I but see with the more indigna-
tion what Americans *are*. (Author's note.)

Of Rank's rich capital to Freedom's base,
Nor fear the mighty shaft will feebler prove
For the fair ornament that flowers above,—
If yet releas'd from all that pedant throng,
So vain of error and so pledg'd to wrong,
Who hourly teach her, like themselves, to hide
Weakness in vaunt, and barrenness in pride,
She yet can rise, can wreathe the Attic charms
Of soft refinement round the pomp of arms,

And see her poets flash the fires of song,
To light her warriors' thunderbolts along;—
It is to you, to souls that favouring heaven
Has made like yours, the glorious task is given:—
5 Oh! but for *such*, Columbia's days were done;
Rank without ripeness, quicken'd without sun,
Crude at the surface, rotten at the core,
Her fruits would fall, before her spring were
o'er. - - -

PANTISOCRACY

In the summer of 1794 two college students on their vacation, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey, entertained the scheme of founding a Utopian community on the banks of the Susquehanna.¹ Probably the attractive descriptions of America written by William Bartram and Crèvecoeur had something to do with their decision to migrate to America. The name they chose, Pantisocracy, suggests equal rule by all. Other young men interested in the scheme were George Burnett, Robert Allen, Edmund Seward, and Robert Lovell. Lovell was married to one of the three Fricker sisters, Southey was engaged to a second, and Coleridge—since each member of the proposed community must have a wife—soon became engaged to the third. The plan was abandoned, chiefly for want of money. The scheme as explained in the following letter recalls the well-known Brook Farm experiment nearly half a century later.

THOMAS POOLE TO MR. HASKINS

September 22, 1794.

DEAR SIR—I received your obliging letter a day or two ago, and will with pleasure give you all the information I can respecting the emigration to America to which you allude. But first, perhaps, you would like to have some idea of

the character of the projectors of the scheme. Out of the eight whom they informed me were engaged, I have seen but two, and only spent part of one day with them; their names are
5 Coldridge [*sic*] and Southey.

Coldridge, whom I consider the Principal in the undertaking, and of whom I had heard much before I saw him, is about five and twenty, be-

¹ The beauty of the name *Susquehanna* impressed Coleridge and Southey as it was later to impress Robert Louis Stevenson, who wrote in *Across the Plains* (1879): "And when I had asked the name of a river from the brakesman, and heard that it was called the Susquehanna, the beauty of the name seemed to be part and parcel of the land. As when Adam with divine fitness named the creatures, so this word *Susquehanna* was at once accepted by the fancy. That was the name, as no other could be, for that shining river and desirable valley."

longs to the University of Cambridge, possesses splendid abilities—he is, I understand, a shining scholar, gained the prize for the Greek verses the first or second year he entered the University, and is now engaged in publishing a selection of the best modern Latin poems with a poetical translation. He speaks with much elegance and energy, and with uncommon facility, but he, as generally happens to men of his class, feels the justice of Providence in the want of those inferior abilities which are necessary to the rational discharge of the common duties of life. His aberrations from prudence, to use his own expression, have been great; but he now promises to be as sober and rational as his most sober friends could wish. In religion, he is a Unitarian, if not a Deist; in politics a Democrat, to the utmost extent of the word.

Southey, who was with him, is of the University of Oxford, a younger man, without the splendid abilities of Coldridge, though possessing much information, particularly metaphysical, and is more violent in his principles than even Coldridge himself. In Religion, shocking to say in a mere Boy as he is, I fear he wavers between Deism and Atheism.

Thus much for the characters of two of the Emigrators. Their plan is as follows:—

Twelve gentlemen of good education and liberal principles are to embark with twelve ladies in April next. Previous to their leaving this country they are to have as much intercourse as possible, in order to ascertain each other's dispositions, and firmly to settle every regulation for the government of their future conduct. Their opinion was that they should fix themselves at—I do not recollect the place, but somewhere in a delightful part of the new back settlements; that each man should labour two or three hours in a day, the produce of which labour would, they imagine, be more than sufficient to support the colony. As Adam Smith¹ observes that there is not above one productive man in twenty, they argue that if each laboured the twentieth part of time, it would produce enough to satisfy their wants. The produce of their industry is to be laid up in common for the use of all; and a good library of books is to be collected, and their leisure hours to be spent in

¹ Adam Smith (1723–1790), author of *An Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776).

study, liberal discussions, and the education of their children. A system for the education of their children is laid down, for which, if this plan at all suits you, I must refer you to the authors of it. The regulations relating to the females strike them as the most difficult; whether the marriage contract shall be dissolved if agreeable to one or both parties, and many other circumstances, are not yet determined. The employments of the women are to be the care of infant children, and other occupations suited to their strength, at the same time the greatest attention is to be paid to the cultivation of their minds. Every one is to enjoy his own religious and political opinions, provided they do not encroach on the rules previously made, which rules, it is unnecessary to add, must in some measure be regulated by the laws of the state which includes the district in which they settle. They calculate that each gentleman providing £125 will be sufficient to carry the scheme into execution. Finally, every individual is at liberty, whenever he pleases, to withdraw from the society.

These are the outlines of their plan, and such are their ideas. Could they realise them they would, indeed, realise the age of reason; but, however perfectible human nature may be, I fear it is not yet perfect enough to exist long under the regulations of such a system, particularly when the Executors of the plan are taken from a society in a high degree civilised and corrupted. America is certainly a desirable country, so desirable in my eye that, were it not for some insuperable reasons, I would certainly settle there. At some future period I perhaps may. But I think a man would do well first to see the country and his future hopes, before he removes his connections or any large portion of his property there. I could live, I think, in America, much to my satisfaction and credit, without joining in such a scheme as I have been describing, though I should like well to accompany them, and see what progress they make. . . .

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE TO
ROBERT SOUTHEY

[UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE]
10 o'clock, Thursday morning,
September 18, 1794.

Well, my dear Southey! I am at last arrived at Jesus [College]. My God! how tumultuous are

the movements of my heart. Since I quitted this room what and how important events have been evolved! America! Southey! Miss Fricker! Yes, Southey, you are right. Even Love is the creature of strong motive. I certainly love her. I *think* of her incessantly and with unspeakable tenderness,—with that inward melting away of soul that symptomatizes it.

Pantisocracy! Oh, I shall have such a scheme of it! My head, my heart, are all alive. I have drawn up my arguments in battle array; they shall have the *tactician* excellence of the mathematician with the enthusiasm of the poet. The head shall be the mass; the heart the fiery spirit that fills, informs, and agitates the whole. Harwood—pish! I say nothing of him.

SHAD GOES WITH US. HE IS MY BROTHER! I am longing to be with you. Make Edith my sister. Surely, Southey, we shall be *frendotato: meta frendous*—most friendly where all are friends. She must, therefore, be more emphatically my sister.

Brookes and Berdmore, as I suspected, have spread my opinions in mangled forms at Cambridge. Caldwell, the most pantisocratic of aristocrats, has been laughing at me. Up I arose, terrible in reasoning. He fled from me, because “he could not answer for his own sanity, sitting so near a madman of genius.” He told me that

the strength of my imagination had intoxicated my reason, and that the acuteness of my reason had given a directing influence to my imagination. Four months ago the remark would not have been more elegant than just. Now it is nothing. - - -

[PANTISOCRACY]

No more my visionary soul shall dwell
On joys that were; no more endure to weigh
The shame and anguish of the evil day.
Wisely forgetful! O'er the ocean swell
Sublime of Hope, I seek the cottag'd dell
Where Virtue calm with careless step may stray,
And, dancing to the moonlight roundelay,
The wizard Passions weave an holy spell
Eyes that have ach'd with sorrow! ye shall weep
Tears of doubt-mingled joy, like theirs who start
From precipices of distemper'd sleep,
On which the fierce-eyed fiends their revels keep,
And see the rising sun, and feel it dart
New rays of pleasance trembling to the heart.

- - - I will write you a huge, big letter next week. At present I have to transact the tragedy business, to wait on the Master, to write to Mrs. Southey, Lovell, etc., etc.

God love you, and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

1770 - 1850

TO THE PENNSYLVANIANS
from SONNETS DEDICATED TO
LIBERTY AND ORDER (1845)

As an old man, Wordsworth was visited by many prominent Americans; among them, William Cullen Bryant, who was often referred to as “the American Wordsworth.” Emerson has left a vivid brief account of a visit in his *English Traits*. The old poet, now

grown conservative, viewed with alarm the turn American civilization had taken in the time of Andrew Jackson. The sonnet, “To the Pennsylvanians,” given below, reflects English indignation when the state of Pennsylvania ceased for two years to pay interest on its bonds. With the British refusal in the 1920's to pay the United States her war debts, the sonnet expresses very well the feeling of many an American of that day. Sydney Smith, who had bought

some Pennsylvania bonds, wrote: "The fraud is committed in the profound peace of Pennsylvania, by the richest State in the Union, after the wise investment of the borrowed money in roads and canals, of which the repudiators are every day reaping the advantage. It is an act of bad faith which (all its circumstances considered) has no parallel, and no excuse." One wonders what Smith and Wordsworth would say if they could only know what vast sums of money and supplies the United States has given or loaned to England since 1938.

Days undefiled by luxury or sloth,
Firm self-denial, manners grave and staid,

Rights equal, laws with cheerfulness obeyed,
Words that require no sanction from an oath,
And simple honesty a common growth—
This high repute, with bounteous Nature's aid,
5 Won confidence, now ruthlessly betrayed
At will, your power the measure of your troth!—
All who revere the memory of Penn
Grieve for the land on whose wild woods his
name
10 Was fondly grafted with a virtuous aim,
Renounced, abandoned by degenerate Men
For state-dishonour black as ever came
To upper air from Mammon's loathsome den.

LORD BYRON

1788 - 1824

[Daniel Boone]
from DON JUAN
(1823)

Byron and Shelley were too revolutionary not to sympathize with the political innovations of the American republic. Byron's well-known apostrophe to Washington has already been given (see p. 160). His scathing denunciation of George III in *The Vision of Judgment* is also well known. In the eighth canto of *Don Juan* he praises the sturdy virtues of the famous backwoodsman, Daniel Boone.

The town was enter'd. Oh Eternity!—
"God made the country, and man made the town,"

So Cowper says—and I begin to be
Of his opinion, when I see cast down
Rome, Babylon, Tyre, Carthage, Nineveh,
All walls men know, and many never known;
And pondering on the present and the past,
To deem the woods shall be our home at last:—

Of all men, saving Sylla the man-slayer,
Who passes for in life and death most lucky,
Of the great names which in our faces stare,

The General Boon, back-woodsman of Kentucky
Was happiest amongst mortals anywhere;
For killing nothing but a bear or buck, he
5 Enjoy'd the lonely, vigorous, harmless days
Of his old age in wilds of deepest maze.

Crime came not near him—she is not the child
Of solitude; Health shrank not from him—for
10 Her home is in the rarely trodden wild,
Where if men seek her not, and death be more
Their choice than life, forgive them, as beguiled
By habit to what their own hearts abhor—
In cities caged. The present case in point I
15 Cite is, that Boon lived hunting up to ninety;

And what's still stranger, left behind a name
For which men vainly decimate the throng,
Not only famous, but of that good fame
20 Without which glory's but a tavern song—
Simple, serene, the *antipodes* of shame,
Which hate nor envy e'er could tinge with
wrong;
An active hermit, even in age the child
25 Of Nature, or the Man of Ross run wild.

'Tis true he shrank from men even of his nation,
 When they built up unto his darling trees,—
 He moved some hundred miles off, for a station
 Where there were fewer houses and more ease;
 The inconvenience of civilisation

Is, that you neither can be pleased nor please;
 But where he met the individual man,
 He show'd himself as kind as mortal can.

He was not all alone: around him grew
 A sylvan tribe of children of the chase,
 Whose young, unawaken'd world was ever new
 Nor sword nor sorrow yet had left a trace
 On her unwrinkled brow, nor could you view
 A frown on Nature's or on human face;
 The free-born forest found and kept them
 free,
 And fresh as is a torrent or a tree.

And tall, and strong, and swift of foot were they,
 Beyond the dwarfing city's pale abortions,

Because their thoughts had never been the prey
 Of care or gain: the green woods were their
 portions;

No sinking spirits told them they grew grey,
 5 No fashion made them apes of her distortions;
 Simple they were, not savage; and their rifles
 Though very true, were not yet used for trifles

Motion was in their days, rest in their slumbers,
 10 And cheerfulness the handmaid of their toil;
 Nor yet too many nor too few their numbers;
 Corruption could not make their hearts her
 soil;

The lust which stings, the splendour which en-
 15 cumbers,

With the free foresters divide no spoil;
 Serene, not sullen, were the solitudes
 Of this unsighing people of the woods.

So much for Nature:—by way of variety,
 20 Now back to thy great joys, Civilisation! - - -

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

1792 - 1822

from THE REVOLT OF ISLAM (1817)

Shelley's maternal grandfather once lived in Newark, New Jersey, where he is said to have been a quack doctor. Once at least while denouncing European tyrannies, Shelley pointed to America as the land of the free. In *The Revolt of Islam*, Canto Eleventh, stanzas xxii-xxiv, Laon, the hero of the poem, disguised as a stranger, speaks to the Tyrant and his Senate:

There is a People mighty in its youth,
 A land beyond the Oceans of the West,
 Where, though with rudest rites, Freedom and
 Truth
 Are worshipped; from a glorious Mother's 15
 breast,
 Who, since high Athens fell, among the rest
 Sate like the Queens of Nations, but in woe,

By inbred monsters outraged and oppressed,
 Turns to her chainless child for succor now,
 It draws the milk of Power in Wisdom's fullest
 flow.

5 That land is like an Eagle, whose young gaze
 Feeds on the noontide beam, whose golden
 plume

Floats moveless on the storm, and in the blaze
 10 Of sunrise gleams when earth is wrapped in
 gloom;

An epitaph of glory for the tomb
 Of murdered Europe may thy fame be made,
 Great People! as the sands shalt thou become;
 Thy growth is swift as morn when night must
 fade;

The multitudinous Earth shall sleep beneath thy
 shade.

Yes, in the desert there is built a home
 For Freedom. Genius is strong to rear
 The monuments of man beneath the dome
 Of a new Heaven; myriads assemble there,
 Whom the proud lords of man, in rage or fear, 5

Drive from their wasted homes. The boon I
 pray
 Is this—that Cythna shall be convoyed there,—
 Nay, start not at the name—America!
 And then to you this night Laon will I betray.

WILLIAM HAZLITT

1778 - 1830

from ON READING NEW BOOKS

(1827)

Hazlitt, the son of a Unitarian minister, spent a part of his boyhood in America, with little apparent effect upon his writings. The brilliant but somewhat erratic critic occasionally commented upon American books, and he included a discussion of Irving ("Geoffrey Crayon") in *The Spirit of the Age* (1825). In the following brief passage from one of his best essays he gives his view of the American literature problem:

Is it not provoking with us to see the *Beggar's Opera* cut down to two acts, because some of the allusions are too broad, and others not understood? And in America—that Van Diemen's Land of Letters—this sterling satire is hooted off the stage, because fortunately they have no such

state of manners as it describes before their eyes; and because, unfortunately, they have no conception of any thing but what they see. America is singularly and awkwardly situated in this respect. It is a new country with an old language; and while every thing about them is of a day's growth, they are constantly applying to us to know what to think of it, and taking their opinions from our books and newspapers with a strange mixture of servility and the spirit of contradiction. They are an independent state in politics: in literature they are still a colony from us—not out of our leading strings, and strangely puzzled how to determine between the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews. We have naturalised some of their writers, who had formed themselves upon us. This is at once a compliment to them and to ourselves.

IV. American Renaissance, 1830-1870

CHARLES DICKENS

1812 - 1870

[Martin Chuzzlewit in New York]

from THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES
OF MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT (1843-1844)

Dickens visited America in 1842 and again in 1867. His impressions of America are found in *American Notes* (1842) and *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843-1844), which, as Carlyle put it, caused the entire Yankee nation to rise up like one universal soda bottle. Dickens had been an American favorite, more popular than perhaps even Scott had been. His democratic and humanitarian sympathies had led Americans to expect in him a champion of their way of life. Dickens, however, proved unsympathetic. His advocacy of an international copyright law and his denunciations of slavery gave offense. What galled his American readers most was his picture of American manners. Making due allowance for the exaggeration of the satirist, the modern American reader recognizes much truth in Dickens's account. The selection given below should be compared with the chapter on New York in *American Notes*. The text is from the first American edition, which was probably pirated. For Dickens's visits to America, see John Forster's life of Dickens (1872-1874).

One might aptly apply to Dickens Alexis de Tocqueville's criticism of British travelers in America:

"The English make game of the manners of the Americans; but it is singular that most of the writers who have drawn these ludicrous delineations belonged themselves to the middle classes in England, to whom the same delineations are exceedingly applicable: so that these pitiless censors for the most part furnish an example of the very thing they blame in the United States; they do not perceive that they

are deiding themselves, to the great amusement of the aristocracy of their own country."

CHAPTER XVI

Martin Disembarks from that Noble and Fast-sailing Line of Packet Ship, the Screw, at the Port of New York, in the United States of America. He Makes Some Acquaintances, and Dines at a Boarding-house. The Particulars of those Transactions.

Some trifling excitement prevailed upon the very brink and margin of the land of liberty; for an alderman had been elected the day before; and Party Feeling naturally running rather high on such an exciting occasion, the friends of the disappointed candidate had found it necessary to assert the great principles of Purity of Election and Freedom of Opinion by breaking a few legs and arms, and furthermore pursuing one obnoxious gentleman through the streets with the design of slitting his nose. These good-natured little outbursts of the popular fancy were not in themselves sufficiently remarkable to create any great stir, after the lapse of a whole night; but they found fresh life and notoriety in the breath of the news-boys, who not only proclaimed them with shrill yells in all the highways and byeways of the town, upon the wharves and among the shipping, but on the deck and down in the cabins of the steam-boat; which, before she touched the shore, was boarded and overrun by a legion of those young citizens.

"Here's this morning's New York Sewer!" cried one. "Here's this morning's New York Stabber! Here's the New York Family Spy! Here's the New York Private Listener! Here's the New York Peeper! Here's the New York Plunderer! Here's the New York Keyhole Reporter! Here's the New York Rowdy Journal! Here's all the New York papers! Here's full particulars of the patriotic loco-foco¹ movement yesterday, in which the whigs was so chewed up; and the last Alabama gouging case; and the interesting Arkansas dool with Bowie knives; and all the Political, Commercial, and Fashionable News. Here they are! Here they are! Here's the papers, here's the papers!"

"Here's the Sewer!" cried another. "Here's the New York Sewer! Here's some of the twelfth thousand of to-day's Sewer, with the best accounts of the markets, and all the shipping news, and four whole columns of country correspondence, and a full account of the Ball at Mrs. White's last night, where all the beauty and fashion of New York was assembled, with the Sewer's own particulars of the private lives of all the ladies that was there! Here's the Sewer! Here's some of the twelfth thousand of the New York Sewer! Here's the Sewer's exposure of the Wall Street Gang, and the Sewer's exposure of the Washington Gang, and the Sewer's exclusive account of a flagrant act of dishonesty committed by the Secretary of State when he was eight years old; now communicated, at a great expense, by his own nurse. Here's the Sewer! Here's the New York Sewer, in its twelfth thousand, with a whole column of New Yorkers to be shown up, and all their names printed! Here's the Sewer's article upon the Judge that tried him, day afore yesterday, for libel, and the Sewer's tribute to the independent jury that didn't convict him, and the Sewer's account of what they might have expected if they had! Here's the Sewer, here's the Sewer! Here's the wide-awake Sewer; always on the look-out; the leading Journal of the United States, now in its twelfth thousand, and still a-printing off:—Here's the New York Sewer!"

"It is in such enlightened means," said a voice, almost in Martin's ear, "that the bubbling passions of my country find a vent."

Martin turned involuntarily, and saw, standing close at his side, a sallow gentleman, with sunken cheeks, black hair, small twinkling eyes,

and a singular expression hovering about that region of his face, which was not a frown, nor a leer, and yet might have been mistaken at the first glance for either. Indeed it would have been difficult on a much closer acquaintance, to describe it in any more satisfactory terms than as a mixed expression of vulgar cunning and conceit. This gentleman wore a rather broad-brimmed hat for the greater wisdom of his appearance; and had his arms folded for the greater impressiveness of his attitude. He was somewhat shabbily dressed in a blue surtout reaching nearly to his ankles, short loose trousers of the same colour, and a faded buff waistcoat, through which a discoloured shirt-frill struggled to force itself into notice, as asserting an equality to civil rights with the other portions of his dress, and maintaining a declaration of Independence on its own account. His feet, which were of unusually large proportions, were leisurely crossed before him as he half leaned against, half sat upon, the steam-boat's side; and his thick cane, shod with a mighty ferrule at one end and armed with a great metal knob at the other, depended from a line-and-tassel on his wrist. Thus attired, and thus composed into an aspect of great profundity, the gentleman twitched up the right-hand corner of his mouth and his right eye, simultaneously, and said, once more:

"It is in such enlightened means, that the bubbling passions of my country find a vent."

As he looked at Martin, and nobody else was by, Martin inclined his head, and said:

"You allude to—"

"To the Palladium of rational Liberty at home, sir, and the dread of Foreign oppression abroad," returned the gentleman, as he pointed with his cane to an uncommonly dirty news-boy with one eye. "To the Envy of the world, sir, and the leaders of Human Civilisation. Let me ask you, sir," he added, bringing the ferrule of his stick heavily upon the deck with the air of a man who must not be equivocated with, "how do you like my Country?"

"I am hardly prepared to answer that question yet," said Martin, "seeing that I have not been ashore."

"Well, I should expect you were not prepared, sir," said the gentleman, "to behold such signs of National Prosperity as those?"

He pointed to the vessels lying at the wharves; and then gave a vague flourish with his stick, as

¹ The left wing of the Democratic Party.

if he would include the air and water, generally, in this remark.

"Really," said Martin, "I don't know. Yes. I think I was."

The gentleman glanced at him with a knowing look, and said he liked his policy. It was natural, he said, and it pleased him as a philosopher to observe the prejudices of human nature.

"You have brought, I see, sir," he said, turning round towards Martin, and resting his chin on the top of his stick, "the usual amount of misery and poverty, and ignorance and crime, to be located in the bosom of the Great Republic. Well, sir! let 'em come on in ship-loads from the old country: when vessels are about to founder, the rats are said to leave 'em. There is considerable of truth, I find, in that remark."

"The old ship will keep afloat a year or two longer yet, perhaps," said Martin with a smile, partly occasioned by what the gentleman said, and partly by his manner of saying it, which was odd enough, for he emphasized all the small words and syllables in his discourse, and left the others to take care of themselves: as if he thought the larger parts of speech could be trusted alone, but the little ones required to be constantly looked after.

"Hope is said by the poet, sir," observed the gentleman, "to be the nurse of Young Desire."

Martin signified that he had heard of the cardinal virtue in question serving occasionally in that domestic capacity.

"She will not rear her infant in the present instance, sir, you'll find," observed the gentleman.

"Time will show," said Martin.

The gentleman nodded his head, gravely; and said, "What is your name, sir?"

Martin told him.

"How old are you, sir?"

Martin told him.

"What's your profession, sir?"

Martin told him that, also.

"What is your destination, sir?" inquired the gentleman.

"Really," said Martin, laughing, "I can't satisfy you in that particular, for I don't know it myself."

"Yes?" said the gentleman.

"No," said Martin.

The gentleman adjusted his cane under his left arm, and took a more deliberate and com-

plete survey of Martin than he had yet had leisure to make. When he had completed his inspection, he put out his right hand, shook Martin's hand, and said:

5 "My name is Colonel Diver, sir. I am the Editor of the New York Rowdy Journal."

Martin received the communication with that degree of respect which an announcement so distinguished appeared to demand.

10 "The New York Rowdy Journal, sir," resumed the colonel, "is, as I expect you know, the organ of our aristocracy in this city."

"Oh! there *is* an aristocracy here, then?" said Martin. "Of what is it composed?"

15 "Of intelligence, sir," replied the colonel; "of intelligence and virtue. And of their necessary consequence in this republic—dollars, sir"

Martin was very glad to hear this, feeling well assured that if intelligence and virtue led, as a matter of course, to the acquisition of dollars, he would speedily become a great capitalist. He was about to express the gratification such news afforded him, when he was interrupted by the captain of the ship, who came up at the moment to shake hands with the colonel; and who, seeing a well-dressed stranger on deck (for Martin had thrown aside his cloak), shook hands with him also. This was an unspeakable relief to Martin, who, in spite of the acknowledged supremacy of Intelligence and Virtue in that happy country, would have been deeply mortified to appear before Colonel Diver in the poor character of a steerage passenger.

"Well, cap'en!" said the colonel.

35 "Well, colonel!" cried the captain. "You're looking most uncommon bright, sir. I can hardly realise its being you, and that's a fact."

"A good passage, cap'en?" inquired the colonel, taking him aside.

40 "Well, now! It was a pretty spanking run, sir," said, or rather sung, the captain, who was a genuine New Englander: "considerin' the weather."

"Yes?" said the colonel.

45 "Well! It was, sir," said the captain. "I've just now sent a boy up to your office with the passenger-list, colonel."

"You haven't got another boy to spare, p'raps, cap'en?" said the colonel, in a tone almost amounting to severity.

50 "I guess there air a dozen if you want 'em, colonel," said the captain.

"One moderate big 'un could convey a dozen of champagne, perhaps," observed the colonel, musing "to my office. You said a spanking run, I think?"

"Well! so I did," was the reply.

"It's very nigh, you know," observed the colonel. "I'm glad it was a spanking run, cap'en. Don't mind about quarts, if you're short of 'em. The boy can as well bring four-and-twenty pints, and travel twice as once.—A first-rate spanker, cap'en, was it? Yes?"

"A most e-tarnal spanker," said the skipper.

"I admire at your good fortune, cap'en. You might loan me a cork-screw at the same time, and a half-a-dozen glasses, if you liked. However bad the elements combine against my country's noble packet-ship the *Screw*, sir," said the colonel, turning to Martin, and drawing a flourish on the surface of the deck with his cane, "her passage either way, is almost certain to eventuate a spanker!"

The captain, who had the *Sewer* below at that moment, lunching expensively in one cabin, while the amiable *Stabber* was drinking himself into a state of blind madness in another, took a cordial leave of his friend the colonel, and hurried away to despatch the champagne: well-knowing (as it afterwards appeared) that if he failed to conciliate the editor of the *Rowdy Journal*, that potentate would denounce him and his ship in large capitals before he was a day older; and would probably assault the memory of his mother also, who had not been dead more than twenty years. The colonel being again left alone with Martin, checked him as he was moving away, and offered, in consideration of his being an Englishman, to show him the town, and to introduce him, if such were his desire, to a genteel boarding-house. But before they entered on these proceedings (he said), he would beseech the honour of his company at the office of the *Rowdy Journal*, to partake of a bottle of champagne of his own importation.

All this was so extremely kind and hospitable, that Martin, though it was quite early in the morning, readily acquiesced. So, instructing Mark, who was deeply engaged with his friend and her three children,—when he had done assisting them, and had cleared the baggage, to wait for further orders at the *Rowdy Journal* Office,—he accompanied his new friend on shore.

They made their way as best they could

through the melancholy crowd of emigrants upon the wharf—who, grouped about their beds and boxes with the bare ground below them and the bare sky above, might have fallen from another planet, for anything they knew of the country—and walked for some distance along a busy street, bounded on one side by the quays and shipping; and on the other by a long row of staring red-brick storehouses and offices, ornamented with more white boards and black letters, than Martin had ever seen before, in fifty times the space. Presently they turned up a narrow street, and presently into other narrow streets, until at last they stopped before a house whereon was painted in great characters, "*ROWDY JOURNAL*."

The colonel, who had walked the whole way with one hand in his breast, his head occasionally wagging from side to side, and his hat thrown back upon his ears—like a man who was oppressed to inconvenience by a sense of his own greatness—led the way up a dark and dirty flight of stairs into a room of similar character, all littered and bestrewn with odds and ends of newspapers and other crumpled fragments, both in proof and manuscript. Behind a mangy old writing table in this apartment, sat a figure with the stump of a pen in its mouth and a great pair of scissors in its right hand, clipping and slicing at a file of *Rowdy Journals*; and it was such a laughable figure that Martin had some difficulty in preserving his gravity, though conscious of the close observation of Colonel Diver.

The individual who sat slipping and slicing as aforesaid at the *Rowdy Journals*, was a small young gentleman of very juvenile appearance, and unwholesomely pale in the face; partly, perhaps, from intense thought, but partly, there is no doubt, from the excessive use of tobacco, which he was at that moment chewing vigorously. He wore his shirt-collar turned down over a black ribbon, and his lank hair—a fragile crop—was not only smoothed and parted back from his brow, that none of the Poetry of his aspect might be lost, but had here and there been grubbed up by the roots; which accounted for his loftiest developments being somewhat pimply. He had that order of nose on which the envy of mankind has bestowed the appellation "snub," and it was very much turned up at the end, as with a lofty scorn. Upon the upper lip of this young gentleman, were tokens of a sandy

down—so very, very smooth and scant, that though encouraged to the utmost, it looked more like a recent trace of gingerbread, than the fair promise of a moustache; and this conjecture, his apparently tender age went far to strengthen. He was intent upon his work, and every time he snapped the great pair of scissors, he made a corresponding motion with his jaws, which gave him a very terrible appearance.

Martin was not long in determining within himself that this must be Colonel Diver's son; the hope of the family, and future mainspring of the Rowdy Journal. Indeed he had begun to say that he presumed that this was the colonel's little boy, and that it was very pleasant to see him playing at Editor in all the guilelessness of childhood, when the colonel proudly interposed, and said:

"My War Correspondent, sir—Mr. Jefferson Brick!"

Martin could not help starting at this unexpected announcement, and the consciousness of the irretrievable mistake he had nearly made.

Mr. Brick seemed pleased with the sensation he produced upon the stranger, and shook hands with him with an air of patronage designed to reassure him, and to let him know that there was no occasion to be frightened, for he (Brick) wouldn't hurt him.

"You have heard of Jefferson Brick, I see, sir," quoth the colonel, with a smile. "England has heard of Jefferson Brick. Europe has heard of Jefferson Brick. Let me see. When did you leave England, sir?"

"Five weeks ago," said Martin.

"Five weeks ago," repeated the colonel, thoughtfully; as he took his seat upon the table, and swung his legs. "Now let me ask you, sir, which of Mr. Brick's articles had become at that time the most obnoxious to the British Parliament and the court of Saint James's?"

"Upon my word," said Martin, "I——"

"I have reason to know, sir," interrupted the colonel, "that the aristocratic circles of your country quail before the name of Jefferson Brick. I should like to be informed, sir, from your lips, which of his sentiments has struck the deadliest blow——"

"—At the hundred heads of the Hydra of Corruption now grovelling in the dust beneath the lance of Reason, and spouting up to the universal arch above us, its sanguinary gore," said

Mr. Brick, putting on a blue cloth cap with a glazed front, and quoting his last article.

"The libation of freedom, Brick"—hinted the colonel.

5 "—Must sometimes be quaffed in blood, colonel," cried Brick. And when he said "blood," he gave the great pair of scissors a sharp snap, as if *they* said blood too, and were quite of his opinion.

10 This done, they both looked at Martin, pausing for a reply.

"Upon my life," said Martin, who had by this time quite recovered his usual coolness, "I can't give you any satisfactory information about it; for the truth is that I ——"

15 "Stop!" cried the colonel, glancing sternly at his war correspondent, and giving his head one shake after every sentence. "That you never heard of Jefferson Brick, sir. That you never read Jefferson Brick, sir. That you never saw the Rowdy Journal, sir. That you never knew, sir, of its mighty influence upon the cabinets of Europe—Yes?"

20 "That's what I was about to observe, certainly," said Martin.

"Keep cool, Jefferson," said the colonel gravely. "Don't bust! oh you Europeans! Arter that, let's have a glass of wine!" So saying, he got down from the table, and produced from a basket outside the door, a bottle of champagne, and three glasses.

"Mr. Jefferson Brick, sir," said the colonel, filling Martin's glass and his own, and pushing the bottle to that gentleman, "will give us a sentiment."

35 "Well, sir!" cried the war correspondent, "since you have concluded to call upon me, I will respond. I will give you, sir, The Rowdy Journal and its brethren; the well of Truth, whose waters are black from being composed of printers' ink, but are quite clear enough for my country to behold the shadow of her Destiny reflected in."

"Hear, hear!" cried the colonel, with great complacency. "There are flowery components, sir, in the language of my friend?"

"Very much so, indeed," said Martin.

"There is to-day's Rowdy, sir," observed the colonel, handing him a paper. "You'll find Jefferson Brick at his usual post in the van of human civilisation and moral purity."

The colonel was by this time seated on the

table again. Mr. Brick also took up a position on that same piece of furniture; and they fell to drinking pretty hard. They often looked at Martin as he read the paper, and then at each other; and when he laid it down, which was not until they had finished a second bottle, the colonel asked him what he thought of it.

"Why, it's horribly personal," said Martin.

The colonel seemed much flattered by this remark; and said he hoped it was.

"We are independent here, sir," said Mr. Jefferson Brick. "We do as we like."

"If I may judge from this specimen," returned Martin, "there must be a few thousands here rather the reverse of independent, who do as they don't like."

"Well! They yield to the mighty mind of the Popular Instructor, sir," said the colonel. "They rile up, sometimes, but in general we have a hold upon our citizens, both in public and in private life, which is as much one of the ennobling institutions of our happy country as —"

"As nigger slavery itself," suggested Mr. Brick.

"En-tirely so," remarked the colonel.

"Pray," said Martin, after some hesitation, "may I venture to ask, with reference to a case I observe in this paper of yours, whether the Popular Instructor often deals in—I am at a loss to express it without giving you offence—in forgery? In forged letters, for instance," he pursued, for the colonel was perfectly calm and quite at his ease, "solemnly purporting to have been written at recent periods by living men?"

"Well, sir!" replied the colonel. "It does, now and then."

"And the popular instructed—what do they do?" asked Martin.

"Buy 'em": said the colonel.

Mr. Jefferson Brick expectorated and laughed; the former copiously, the latter approvingly.

"Buy 'em by hundreds of thousands," resumed the colonel. "We are a smart people here, and can appreciate smartness."

"Is smartness American for forgery?" asked Martin.

"Well!" said the colonel, "I expect it's American for a good many things that you call by other names. But you can't help yourselves in Europe. We can."

"And do, sometimes," thought Martin. "You help yourselves with very little ceremony, too!"

"At all events, whatever name we choose to employ," said the colonel, stooping down to roll the third empty bottle into a corner after the other two, "I suppose the art of forgery was not invented here, sir?"

"I suppose not," replied Martin.

"Nor any other kind of smartness, I reckon?"

"Invented! No, I presume not."

"Well!" said the colonel; "then we got it all from the old country, and the old country's to blame for it, and not the new 'un. There's an end of *that*. Now if Mr. Jefferson Brick and you will be so good as to clear, I'll come out last, and lock the door."

Rightly interpreting this as the signal for their departure, Martin walked down stairs after the war correspondent, who preceded him with great majesty. The colonel following, they left the Rowdy Journal Office and walked forth into the streets: Martin feeling doubtful whether he ought to kick the colonel for having presumed to speak to him, or whether it came within the bounds of possibility that he and his establishment could be among the boasted usages of that regenerated land.

It was clear that Colonel Diver, in the security of his strong position, and in his perfect understanding of the public sentiment, cared very little what Martin or anybody else thought about him. His high-spiced wares were made to sell, and they sold; and his thousands of readers could as rationally charge their delight in filth upon him, as a glutton can shift upon his cook the responsibility of his beastly excess. Nothing would have delighted the colonel more than to be told that no such man as he could walk in high success the streets of any other country in the world: for that would only have been a logical assurance to him of the correct adaptation of his labours to the prevailing taste, and of his being strictly and peculiarly a national feature of America.

They walked a mile or so along a handsome street which the colonel said was called Broadway, and which Mr. Jefferson Brick said "whipped the universe." Turning, at length, into one of the numerous streets which branched from this main thoroughfare, they stopped before a rather mean-looking house with jalousie blinds to every window; a flight of steps before the green street-door; a shining white ornament on the rails on either side like a petrified pine-

apple polished; a little oblong plate of the same material over the knocker, whereon the name of "Pawkins" was engraved; and four accidental pigs looking down the area.

The colonel knocked at this house with the air of a man who lived there; and an Irish girl popped her head out of one of the top windows to see who it was. Pending her journey down stairs, the pigs were joined by two or three friends from the next street, in company with whom they lay down sociably in the gutter.

"Is the major in-doors?" inquired the colonel, as he entered.

"Is it the master, sir?" returned the girl, with a hesitation which seemed to imply that they were rather flush of majors in that establishment.

"The master!" said Colonel Diver, stopping short and looking round at his war correspondent.

"Oh! The depressing institutions of that British empire, colonel!" said Jefferson Brick. "Master!"

"What's the matter with the word?" asked Martin.

"I should hope it was never heard in our country, sir: that's all," said Jefferson Brick: "except when it is used by some degraded Help, as new to the blessings of our form of government, as this Help is. There are no masters here."

"All 'owners,' are they?" said Martin.

Mr. Jefferson Brick followed in the Rowdy Journal's footsteps without returning any answer. Martin took the same course, thinking as he went, that perhaps the free and independent citizens, who in their moral elevation, owned the colonel for their master, might render better homage to the goddess, Liberty, in nightly dreams upon the oven of a Russian Serf.

The colonel led the way into a room at the back of the house upon the ground-floor, light, and of fair dimensions, but exquisitely uncomfortable; having nothing in it but the four cold white walls and ceiling, a mean carpet, a dreary waste of dining-table reaching from end to end, and a bewildering collection of cane-bottomed chairs. In the further region of this banquetting-hall was a stove, garnished on either side with a great brass spittoon, and shaped in itself like three little iron barrels set up on end in a fender, and joined together on the principle of the Siamese Twins. Before it, swinging himself in a rocking-chair, lounged a large gentleman with

his hat on, who amused himself by spitting alternately into the spittoon on the right hand [of] the stove, and the spittoon on the left, and then working his way back again in the same order.

5 A negro lad in a soiled white jacket was busily engaged in placing on the table two long rows of knives and forks, relieved at intervals by jugs of water; and as he travelled down one side of this festive board, he straightened with his dirty hands the dirtier cloth, which was all askew, and had not been removed since breakfast. The atmosphere of this room was rendered intensely hot and stifling by the stove, but being further flavoured by a sickly gush of soup from the kitchen, and by such remote suggestions of tobacco as lingered within the brazen receptacles already mentioned, it became, to a stranger's senses, almost insupportable.

The gentleman in the rocking-chair having his back towards them, and being much engaged in his intellectual pastime, was not aware of their approach until the colonel, walking up to the stove, contributed his mite towards the support of the left-hand spittoon, just as the major— for it was the major—bore down upon it. Major Pawkins then reserved his fire, and looking upward, said, with a peculiar air of quiet weariness, like a man who had been up all night—an air which Martin had already observed both in the colonel and Mr. Jefferson Brick—

"Well, colonel!"

"Here is a gentleman from England, major," the colonel replied, "who has concluded to locate himself here if the amount of compensation suits him."

35 "I am glad to see you, sir," observed the major, shaking hands with Martin, and not moving a muscle of his face. "You are pretty bright, I hope?"

40 "Never better," said Martin.

"You are never likely to be," returned the major. "You will see the sun shine *here*."

"I think I remember to have seen it shine at home, sometimes," said Martin, smiling.

45 "I think not," replied the major. He said so with a stoical indifference certainly, but still in a tone of firmness which admitted of no further dispute on that point. When he had thus settled the question, he put his hat a little on one side for the greater convenience of scratching his head, and saluted Mr. Jefferson Brick with a lazy nod.

Major Pawkins (a gentleman of Pennsylvanian origin) was distinguished by a very large skull, and a great mass of yellow forehead; in deference to which commodities, it was currently held in bar-rooms and other such places of resort, that the major was a man of huge sagacity. He was further to be known by a heavy eye and a dull slow manner; and for being a man of that kind who—mentally speaking—requires a deal of room to turn himself in. But in trading on his stock of wisdom, he invariably proceeded on the principle of putting all the goods he had (and more) into his window; and that went a great way with his constituency of admirers. It went a great way, perhaps, with Mr. Jefferson Brick, who took occasion to whisper in Martin's ear:

"One of the most remarkable men in our country, sir!"

It must not be supposed, however, that this perpetual exhibition in the market-place of all his stock in trade for sale or hire, was the major's sole claim to a very large share of sympathy and support. He was a great politician; and the one article of his creed, in reference to all public obligations involving the good faith and integrity of his country, was, "run a moist pen slick through everything, and start fresh." This made him a patriot. In commercial affairs he was a bold speculator. In plainer words he had a most distinguished genius for swindling, and could start a bank, or negotiate a loan, or form a land-jobbing company (entailing ruin, pestilence, and death, on hundreds of families), with any gifted creature in the Union. This made him an admirable man of business. He could hang about a bar-room, discussing the affairs of the nation, for twelve hours together; and in that time could hold forth with more intolerable dulness, chew more tobacco, smoke more tobacco, drink more rum-toddy, mint-julep, gin-sling, and cocktail, than any private gentleman of his acquaintance. This made him an orator and a man of the people. In a word, the major was a rising character and a popular character, and was in a fair way to be sent by the popular party to the State House of New York, if not in the end to Washington itself. But as a man's private prosperity does not always keep pace with his patriotic devotion to public affairs; and as fraudulent transactions have their downs as well as ups: the major was occasionally under a cloud. Hence, just now, Mrs. Pawkins kept a boarding-house,

and Major Pawkins rather "loafed" his time away, than otherwise.

"You have come to visit our country, sir, at a season of great commercial depression," said the major.

"At an alarming crisis," said the colonel.

"At a period of unprecedented stagnation," said Mr. Jefferson Brick.

"I am sorry to hear that," returned Martin.

"It's not likely to last, I hope?"

Martin knew nothing about America, or he would have known perfectly well that if its individual citizens, to a man, are to be believed, it always *is* depressed, and always *is* stagnated, and always *is* at an alarming crisis, and never was otherwise; though as a body they are ready to make oath upon the Evangelists at any hour of the day or night, that it is the most thriving and prosperous of all countries on the habitable globe.

"It's not likely to last, I hope?" said Martin.

"Well!" returned the major, "I expect we shall get along somehow, and come right in the end."

"We are an elastic country," said the Rowdy Journal.

"We are a young lion," said Mr. Jefferson Brick.

"We have revivifying and vigorous principles within ourselves," observed the major. "Shall we drink a bitter afore dinner, colonel?"

The colonel assenting to this proposal with great alacrity, Major Pawkins proposed an adjournment to a neighbouring bar-room, which, as he observed, was "only in the next block." He then referred Martin to Mrs. Pawkins for all particulars connected with the rate of board and lodging, and informed him that he would have the pleasure of seeing that lady at dinner, which would soon be ready, as the dinner hour was two o'clock, and it only wanted a quarter now. This reminded him that if the bitter were to be taken at all, there was no time to lose; so he walked off without more ado, and left them to follow if they thought proper.

When the major rose from his rocking-chair before the stove and so disturbed the hot air and balmy whiff of soup which fanned their brows, the odour of stale tobacco became so decidedly prevalent as to leave no doubt of its proceeding mainly from that gentleman's attire. Indeed as Martin walked behind him to the bar-

room, he could not help thinking that the great square major, in his listlessness and languor, looked very much like a stale weed himself, such as might be hoed out of the public garden with great advantage to the decent growth of that preserve, and tossed on some congenial dunghill.

They encountered more weeds in the bar-room, some of whom (being thirsty souls as well as dirty) were pretty stale in one sense, and pretty fresh in another. Among them was a gentleman, who, as Martin gathered from the conversation that took place over the bitter, started that afternoon for the Far West on a six months' business tour; and who, as his outfit and equipment for this journey, had just such another shiny hat and just such another little pale valise, as had composed the luggage of the gentleman who came from England in the Screw.

They were walking back very leisurely; Martin arm-in-arm with Mr. Jefferson Brick, and the major and the colonel side-by-side before them; when, as they came within a house or two of the major's residence, they heard a bell ringing violently. The instant this sound struck upon their ears, the colonel and the major darted off, dashed up the steps and in at a street-door (which stood ajar) like lunatics; while Mr. Jefferson Brick, detaching his arm from Martin's, made a precipitate dive in the same direction, and vanished also.

"Good Heaven!" thought Martin, "the premises are on fire! It was an alarm-bell!"

But there was no smoke to be seen, nor any flame, nor was there any smell of fire. As Martin faltered on the pavement, three more gentlemen, with horror and agitation depicted in their faces, came plunging wildly round the street corner; jostled each other on the steps; struggled for an instant; and rushed into the house in a confused heap of arms and legs. Unable to bear it any longer, Martin followed. Even in his rapid progress, he was run down, thrust aside, and passed, by two more gentlemen, stark mad, as it appeared, with fierce excitement.

"Where is it?" cried Martin, breathlessly, to a negro whom he encountered in the passage.

"In a eating-room sa. 'Kernal sa, him kept a seat 'side himself sa."

"A seat!" cried Martin.

"For a dinner sa."

Martin stared at him for a moment, and burst into a hearty laugh; to which the negro, out of

his natural good humour and desire to please, so heartily responded, that his teeth shone like a gleam of light. "You're the pleasantest fellow I have seen yet," said Martin, clapping him on the back, "and give me a better appetite than bitters."

With this sentiment he walked into the dining-room and slipped into a chair next the colonel, which that gentleman (by this time nearly through his dinner) had turned down, in reserve for him, with its back against the table.

It was a numerous company—eighteen or twenty, perhaps. Of these, some five or six were ladies, who sat wedged together in a little phalanx by themselves. All the knives and forks were working away at a rate that was quite alarming; very few words were spoken; and everybody seemed to eat his utmost in self-defence, as if a famine were expected to set in before breakfast time to-morrow morning, and it had become high time to assert the first law of nature. The poultry, which may perhaps be considered to have formed the staple of the entertainment—for there was a turkey at the top, a pair of ducks at the bottom, and two fowls in the middle—disappeared as rapidly as if every bird had had the use of its wings, and had flown in desperation down a human throat. The oysters, stewed and pickled, leaped from their capacious reservoirs, and slid by scores into the mouths of the assembly. The sharpest pickles vanished; whole cucumbers at once, like sugar-plumbs [*sic*]; and no man winked his eye. Great heaps of indigestible matter melted away as ice before the sun. It was a solemn and an awful thing to see. Dyspeptic individuals bolted their food in wedges; feeding, not themselves, but broods of nightmares, who were continually standing at livery within them. Spare men, with lank and rigid cheeks, came out unsatisfied from the destruction of heavy dishes, and glared with watchful eyes upon the pastry. What Mrs. Pawkins felt each day at dinner-time is hidden from all human knowledge. But she had one comfort. It was very soon over.

When the colonel had finished his dinner, which event took place while Martin, who had sent his plate for some turkey, was waiting to begin, he asked him what he thought of the boarders, who were from all parts of the Union, and whether he would like to know any particulars concerning them.

"Pray," said Martin, "who is that sickly little

girl opposite, with the tight round eyes? I don't see any body here, who looks like her mother, or who seems to have charge of her "

"Do you mean the matron in blue, sir?" asked the colonel, with emphasis. "That is Mrs. Jefferson Brick, sir."

"No, no," said Martin, "I mean the little girl like a doll—directly opposite."

"Well, sir!" cried the colonel "*That* is Mrs Jefferson Brick."

Martin glanced at the colonel's face, but he was quite serious.

"Bless my soul! I suppose there will be a young Brick then, one of these days?" said Martin.

"There are two young Bricks already, sir," returned the colonel.

The matron looked so uncommonly like a child herself, that Martin could not help saying as much. "Yes, sir," returned the colonel, "but some institutions develop human nature: others retard it."

"Jefferson Brick," he observed, after a short silence, in commendation of his correspondent, "is one of the most remarkable men in our country, sir."

This had passed almost in a whisper, for the distinguished gentleman alluded to, sat on Martin's other hand.

"Pray Mr. Brick," said Martin, turning to him, and asking a question more for conversation's sake than from any feeling of interest in its subject, "who is that"—he was going to say "young" but thought it prudent to eschew the word—"that very short gentleman yonder, with the red nose?"

"That is Pro-fessor Mullet, Sir," replied Jefferson.

"May I ask what he is Professor of?" asked Martin.

"Of education, sir," said Jefferson Brick.

"A sort of schoolmaster, possibly?" Martin ventured to observe.

"He is a man of fine moral elements, sir, and not commonly endowed," said the war correspondent. "He felt it necessary, at the last election for President, to repudiate and denounce his father, who voted on the wrong interest. He has since written some powerful pamphlets, under the signature of 'Suturb,' or Brutus reversed. He is one of the most remarkable men in our country, sir."

"There seems to be plenty of 'em," thought Martin, "at any rate."

Pursuing his inquiries, Martin found that there were no fewer than four majors present, two colonels, one general and a captain, so that he could not help thinking how strongly officered the American militia must be; and wondering very much whether the officers commanded each other or if they did not, where on earth the privates came from. There seemed to be no man there without a title for those who had not attained to military honours were either doctors, professors, or reverends. Three very hard and disagreeable gentlemen were on missions from neighbouring States; one on monetary affairs, one on political, one on sectarian. Among the ladies, there were Mrs Pawkins, who was very straight, bony, and silent; and a wiry-faced old damsel, who held strong sentiments touching the rights of women, and had diffused the same in lectures; but the rest were strangely devoid of individual traits of character, inso-much that any one of them might have changed minds with the other, and nobody would have found it out. These, by the way, were the only members of the party who did not appear to be among the most remarkable people in the country.

Several of the gentlemen got up, one by one, and walked off as they swallowed their last morsel; pausing generally by the stove for a minute or so to refresh themselves at the brass spittoons. A few sedentary characters, however, remained at the table full a quarter of an hour, and did not rise until the ladies rose, when all stood up.

"Where are they going?" asked Martin, in the ear of Mr. Jefferson Brick.

"To their bed-rooms, sir."

"Is there no dessert, or other interval of conversation?" asked Martin, who was disposed to enjoy himself after his long voyage.

"We are a busy people here, sir, and have no time for that," was the reply.

So the ladies passed out in single file; Mr. Jefferson Brick and such other married gentlemen as were left, acknowledging the departure of their other halves by a nod; and there was an end of *them*. Martin thought this an uncomfortable custom, but he kept his opinion to himself for the present, being anxious to hear, and inform himself by the conversation of the busy gentlemen, who now lounged about the stove as

if a great weight had been taken off their minds by the withdrawal of the other sex; and who made a plentiful use of the spittoons and their toothpicks.

It was rather barren of interest, to say the truth; and the greater part of it may be summed up in one word—dollars. All their cares, hopes, joys, affections, virtues, and associations, seemed to be melted down into dollars. Whatever the chance contributions that fell into the slow cauldron of their talk, they made the gruel thick and slab with dollars. Men were weighed by their dollars, measures gauged by their dollars; life was auctioneered, appraised, put up, and knocked down for its dollars. The next respectable thing to dollars was any venture having their attainment for its end. The more of that worthless ballast, honour and fair-dealing, which any man cast overboard from the ship of his Good Name and Good Intent, the more ample stowage-room he had for dollars. Make the commerce one huge lie and mighty theft. Deface the banner of the nation for an idle rag; pollute it star by star; and cut out stripe by stripe as from the arm of a degraded soldier. Do anything for dollars! What is a flag to *them*!

One who rides at all hazards of limb and life in the chase of a fox, will prefer to ride recklessly at most times. So it was with these gentlemen. He was the greatest patriot, in their eyes, who brawled the loudest, and who cared the least for decency. He was their champion, who in the brutal fury of his own pursuit, could cast no stigma upon them, for the hot knavery of theirs. Thus, Martin learned in the five minutes' straggling talk about the stove, that to carry pistols into legislative assemblies, and swords in sticks, and other such peaceful toys; to seize opponents by the throat, as dogs or rats might do; to bluster, bully, and overbear by personal assault; were glowing deeds. Not thrusts and stabs at Freedom, striking far deeper into her House of Life than any sultan's scimitar could reach; but rare incense on her altars, having a grateful scent in patriotic nostrils, and curling upward to the seventh heaven of Fame.

Once or twice, when there was a pause, Martin asked such questions as naturally occurred to him, being a stranger, about the national poets, the theatre, literature, and the arts. But the information which these gentlemen were in a condition to give him on such topics, did not

extend beyond the effusions of such master-spirits of the time, as Colonel Diver, Mr. Jefferson Brick, and others; renowned, as it appeared, for excellence in the achievement of a peculiar style of broadside-essay called "a screamer."

"We are a busy people, sir," said one of the captains, who was from the West, "and have no time for reading mere notions. We don't mind 'em if they come to us in newspapers along with almighty strong stuff of another sort, but darn your books."

Here the general, who appeared to quite grow faint at the bare thought of reading anything which was neither mercantile nor political, and was not in a newspaper, inquired "if any gentleman would drink some?" Most of the company, considering this a very choice and seasonable idea, lounged out one by one to the bar-room in the next block. Thence they probably went to their stores and counting-houses; thence to the bar-room again, to talk once more of dollars, and enlarge their minds with the perusal and discussion of screamers; and thence each man to snore in the bosom of his own family.

"Which would seem," said Martin, pursuing the current of his own thoughts, "to be the principal recreation they enjoy in common." With that, he fell a-musing again on dollars, demagogues, and bar-rooms; debating within himself whether busy people of this class were really as busy as they claimed to be, or only had an inaptitude for social and domestic pleasure.

It was a difficult question to solve; and the mere fact of its being strongly presented to his mind by all that he had seen and heard, was not encouraging. He sat down at the deserted board, and becoming more and more despondent, as he thought of all the uncertainties and difficulties of his precarious situation, sighed heavily.

Now, there had been at the dinner-table a middle-aged man with a dark eye and a sun-burnt face, who had attracted Martin's attention by having something very engaging and honest in the expression of his features; but of whom he could learn nothing from either of his neighbours, who seemed to consider him quite beneath their notice. He had taken no part in the conversation round the stove, nor had he gone forth with the rest; and now, when he heard Martin sigh for the third or fourth time, he interposed with some casual remark, as if he desired, without obtruding himself upon a

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stranger's notice, to engage him in cheerful conversation if he could. His motive was so obvious, and yet so delicately expressed, that Martin felt really grateful to him, and showed him so, in the manner of his reply.

"I will not ask you," said this gentleman with a smile, as he rose and moved towards him, "how you like my country, for I can quite anticipate your real feeling on that point. But, as I am an American, and consequently bound to begin with a question, I'll ask you how do you like the colonel?"

"You are so very frank," returned Martin, "that I have no hesitation in saying that I don't like him at all. Though I must add that I am beholden to him for his civility in bringing me here—and arranging for my stay, on pretty reasonable terms, by the way," he added, remembering that the colonel had whispered him to that effect, before going out.

"Not much beholden," said the stranger drily. "The colonel occasionally boards packet-ships, I have heard, to glean the latest information for his journal; and he occasionally brings strangers to board here, I believe, with a view to the little percentage which attaches to those good offices; and which the hostess deducts from his weekly bill. I don't offend you, I hope?" he added, seeing that Martin reddened.

"My dear sir," returned Martin, as they shook hands, "how is that possible! to tell you the truth, I—am——"

"Yes?" said the gentleman, sitting down beside him.

"I am rather at a loss, since I must speak plainly," said Martin, getting the better of his hesitation, "to know how this colonel escapes being beaten."

"Well! He has been beaten once or twice," remarked the gentleman quietly. "He is one of a class of men, in whom our own Franklin, so long ago as ten years before the close of the last century, foresaw our danger and disgrace. Perhaps you don't know that Franklin, in very severe terms published his opinion that those who were slandered by such fellows as this colonel, having no sufficient remedy in the administration of this country's laws, or in the decent and right-minded feeling of its people, were justified in retorting on such public nuisances by means of a stout cudgel?"

"I was not aware of that," said Martin, "but I am very glad to know it, and I think it worthy of his memory; especially"—here he hesitated again.

5 "Go on," said the other, smiling as if he knew what stuck in Martin's throat.

"Especially," pursued Martin, "as I can already understand that it may have required great courage, even in his time, to write freely on any question which was not a party one in this very free country."

"Some courage, no doubt," returned his new friend. "Do you think it would require any to do so, now?"

15 "Indeed, I think it would; and not a little," said Martin.

"You are right. So very right, that I believe no satirist could breathe this air. If another Juvenal or Swift could rise up among us to-morrow, he would be hunted down. If you have any knowledge of our literature, and can give me the name of any man, American born and bred, who has anatomised our follies as a people, and not as this or that party; and has escaped the foulest and most brutal slander, the most inveterate hatred and intolerant pursuit; it will be a strange name in my ears, believe me. In some cases I could name to you, where a native writer has ventured on the most harmless and good-humoured illustrations of our vices or defects, it has been found necessary to announce, that in a second edition the passage has been expunged, or altered, or explained away, or patched into praise."

30 "And how has this been brought about?" asked Martin in dismay.

"Think what you have seen and heard to-day, beginning with the colonel," said his friend, "and ask yourself. How *they* came about is another question. Heaven forbid that they should be samples of the intelligence and virtue of America, but they come uppermost; and in great numbers too; and too often represent it. Will you walk?"

45 There was a cordial candour in his manner, and an engaging confidence that it would not be abused; a manly bearing on his own part, and a simple reliance on the manly faith of a stranger; which Martin had never seen before. He linked his arm readily in that of the American gentleman, and they walked out together.

It was perhaps to men like this, his new companion, that a traveller of honoured name,² who trod those shores now nearly forty years ago, and woke upon that soil, as many have done

² Thomas Moore, the Irish poet, who also wrote the verses which Dickens quotes. For a more extended quotation from Moore's lines, "To the Honourable W. R. Spencer," see pp. 916-917.

since, to blots and stains upon its high pretensions, which in the brightness of his distant dreams were lost to view, appealed in these words—

5 *Oh but for such Columbia's days were done;
Rank without ripeness, quickened without sun,
Crude at the surface, rotten at the core,
Her fruits would fall before her Spring were o'er!*

SYDNEY DOBELL

1824 - 1874

AMERICA

(1856)

These two sonnets were written when there was talk of war between England and the United States. They were published in Dobell's *England in Time of War* (1856).

Man say, Columbia, we shall hear thy guns.
But in what tongue shall be thy battle-cry?
Not that our sires did love in years gone by,
When all the Pilgrim Fathers were little sons
In merrie homes of Englaunde? Back, and see
Thy satcheled ancestor! Behold, he runs
To mine, and, clasped, they tread the equal lea
To the same village-school, where side by side
They spell "our Father." Hard by, the twin-pride
Of that gray hall whose ancient oriel gleams
Through yon baronial pines, with looks of light
Our sister-mothers sit beneath one tree.

Meanwhile our Shakspeare wanders past and
dreams

His Helena and Hermia. Shall we fight?

5 Nor force nor fraud shall sunder us! O ye
Who north or south, on east or western land,
Native to noble sounds, say truth for truth,
Freedom for freedom, love for love, and God
For God; O ye who in eternal youth
10 Speak with a living and creative flood
This universal English, and do stand
Its breathing book; live worthy of that grand,
Heroic utterance—parted, yet a whole,
Far, yet unsevered,—children brave and free
15 Of the great Mother-tongue, and ye shall be
Lords of an Empire wide as Shakspeare's soul,
Sublime as Milton's immemorial theme,
And rich as Chaucer's speech, and fair as Spenser's dream.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

AMERICA

EUROPE

Before 1607

1446-1506 Columbus

1340?-1400 Chaucer

1452-98 Savonarola

1453 Fall of Constantinople

1466-1536 Erasmus

1475-1543 Copernicus

1475-1564 Michelangelo

1476 Caxton brings printing press to England

1483-1546 Luther; 1483-1520 Raphael

1492 Columbus discovers America

1494?-1553 Rabelais

1516 More, *Utopia*

1519 Cortez invades Mexico

1521 Luther before Diet at Worms

1524-80 Camoëns

1533-92 Montaigne

1542 Death of de Soto

1547-1616 Cervantes

1552?-99 Spenser

1557 Tottel's *Miscellany*

1558-1603 Reign of Elizabeth

1561-1626 Bacon

1562-1635 Lope de Vega

1564-1616 Shakespeare; 1564-1642 Galileo

1565 Founding of St. Augustine

1580-1630 Captain John Smith

1581 Tasso, *Jerusalem Delivered*

1585 Raleigh's "Lost Colony"

1588-1649 John Winthrop

1588 Defeat of Spanish Armada

1590?-1657 William Bradford

1590 Spenser, *The Faerie Queene, Books I-III*

1600-81 Calderón

1603 Accession of James I

1604-84 Roger Williams

1605 Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, Part I; Jonson, Chapman, and Marston, *Eastward Hoe*; Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*

1606 Drayton writes "Ode to the Virginian Voyage"

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE-----1607-1765

AMERICA

EUROPE

1607-1765

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| 1607 Founding of Jamestown | 1607 Jonson, <i>Volpone, or The Fox</i> |
| 1608 Smith writes <i>A True Relation</i> | |
| 1609 Henry Hudson sails up Hudson River | |
| 1612?-72 Anne Bradstreet | 1611 King James Bible |
| 1616 Smith, <i>Description of New England</i> | 1616 Deaths of Shakespeare and Cervantes |
| 1619 Virginia given representative government | 1619 Beaumont and Fletcher, <i>The Maid's Tragedy</i> |
| 1620 Founding of Plymouth Colony | 1620 Beaumont and Fletcher, <i>Philaster</i> |
| 1621 New York settled by the Dutch | 1622-73 Molière |
| | 1623 Shakespeare First Folio; 1623-62 Pascal |
| 1624 Smith, <i>Generall Historie of Virginia</i> | |
| | 1625 Bacon, "Of Plantations" |
| | 1626 George Sandys, <i>Ovid's Metamorphoses</i> (partly translated in Virginia) |
| | 1628-88 John Bunyan |
| 1630 Founding of Massachusetts Bay Colony; Smith, <i>True Travels</i> | |
| 1631-1705 Michael Wigglesworth | 1631-1700 John Dryden |
| | 1632-1701 John Locke |
| 1634 First settlement in Maryland | 1634 Milton's <i>Comus</i> produced |
| | 1635 Founding of French Academy |
| 1636 Founding of Harvard College and of Providence, R. I. | 1636 Corneille's <i>The Cid</i> produced |
| 1637 Morton, <i>New English Canaan</i> (London) | |
| 1639 Stephen Daye sets up printing press in Cambridge, Mass | 1639-99 Racine |
| 1640 <i>Bay Psalm Book</i> | |
| 1642-1714 Benjamin Tompson | 1642 Closing of London theaters; 1642-1727 Sir Isaac Newton |
| 1643 Population of Massachusetts estimated at 16,000 | 1643-1715 Reign of Louis XIV |
| 1644 Roger Williams, <i>Bloudy Tenent of Persecution</i> ;
1644?-1729 Edward Taylor | 1644 Milton, <i>Arcopagitica</i> |
| | |
| | 1646-1716 Leibnitz |
| 1650 Anne Bradstreet, <i>The Tenth Muse</i> (London) | 1648 Herrick, <i>Hesperides</i> |
| 1652-1730 Samuel Sewall | 1649 Execution of Charles I |
| | |
| 1662 Wigglesworth, <i>The Day of Doom</i> | 1660 Accession of Charles II; Pepys begins his diary |
| 1663-1728 Cotton Mather | 1662 Butler, <i>Hudibras</i> , Part I |
| 1664 New Amsterdam becomes New York | |
| | 1664 Molière, <i>Tartuffe</i> |
| | 1667 Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> ; 1667-1745 Jonathan Swift |
| 1670 Founding of Charleston, S. C. | 1670 Pascal, <i>Pensées</i> |
| | 1671 Milton, <i>Samson Agonistes</i> |
| 1674-1744 William Byrd II | 1672 Boileau, <i>L'Art poétique</i> ; 1672-1719 Joseph Addison |
| 1676 Bacon's Rebellion; King Philip's War; Tompson, <i>New-Englands Crisis</i> | 1674 Death of Milton |
| | |
| 1678 Anne Bradstreet, <i>Poems</i> | 1677 Racine, <i>Phèdre</i> |
| | 1678 Dryden, <i>All for Love</i> ; Bunyan, <i>The Pilgrim's Progress</i> , Part I |

1607-1765-----CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

AMERICA

- 1681 Pennsylvania charter granted
1683? *New England Primer*
- 1688 Governor Andros overthrown in Boston (see Hawthorne, "The Gray Champion")
- 1692 Witchcraft trials in Salem, Mass.
1693 Founding of William and Mary College; Cotton Mather, *Wonders of the Invisible World*
- 1700 Population of American colonies estimated at 250,000; Sewall, *Selling of Joseph*
1701 Founding of Yale College
1702 Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana*
- 1703-58 Jonathan Edwards
1704 Sarah Kemble Knight's diary written, 1704-76 *Boston News-Letter*
1706-90 Benjamin Franklin
- 1716 Jonathan Edwards enters Yale
1717 John Wise, *Vindication of the Government of New England Churches*
1718 Founding of New Orleans
- 1720-72 John Woolman
1721 James Franklin launches the *New England Courant*
1722 Benjamin Franklin, "Do-Good Papers"
1723 Franklin arrives in Philadelphia
- 1728 William Byrd surveys dividing line between Va. and N. C.
1729-31 Bishop Berkeley in Rhode Island
- 1731 Franklin founds Philadelphia Library
1732-99 George Washington
1733 Franklin begins *Poor Richard's Almanac*
1735-1826 John Adams; 1735-1815 Crèvecoeur
1736-1799 Patrick Henry
1737-1809 Thomas Paine

EUROPE

- 1681 Dryden, *Absalom and Achitophel*
- 1685 Accession of James II, 1685-1753 Bishop George Berkeley
1687 Newton, *Principia*
1688 James II driven out of England, 1688-1744 Alexander Pope
1689 Accession of William and Mary; 1689-1755 Montesquieu
1690 Locke, *Essay concerning Understanding and Two Treatises on Government*
- 1694-1778 Voltaire
1698 Collier, *Short View of the Immorality and Prophaneness of the Stage*
1700 Dryden, *Fables*
- 1702 Accession of Queen Anne; first English daily newspapers
1703-91 John Wesley
- 1706 Defoe, *Apparition of Mrs. Veal*
1707-54 Henry Fielding
1709-84 Samuel Johnson
1711 Founding of the *Spectator*; Pope, *Essay on Criticism*
1712 Pope, *Rape of the Lock*; 1712-78 Rousseau
1714 Accession of George I
1716-71 Thomas Gray
- 1719 Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*
- 1722 Defoe, *Moll Flanders* and *Colonel Jacque*
1723-90 Adam Smith; 1723-92 Sir Joshua Reynolds
1724-1804 Immanuel Kant
1726 Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*; 1726-28 Voltaire in England
1728 Pope, *Dunciad*, Books I-III; Gay, *Beggar's Opera*
1729-97 Edmund Burke
1730-74 Oliver Goldsmith
- 1732 Pope, *Essay on Man*, Parts I and II
- 1737-94 Edward Gibbon

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE -----1765-1789

AMERICA

- 1738-1804 Jonathan Boucher, first of Whitefield's visits to America
- 1741 Earliest American magazines, Edwards, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*
- 1743-1826 Thomas Jefferson
- 1746 Founding of Princeton
- 1748-1816 Hugh Henry Brackenridge
- 1750 Edwards preaches farewell sermon at Northampton
- 1751 Franklin, *Experiments and Observations on Electricity*; 1751-1836 James Madison
- 1752-1832 Philip Freneau; 1752-1817 Timothy Dwight
- 1754 Outbreak of French and Indian War; Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*; 1754-1812 Joel Barlow
- 1755 Braddock's defeat
- 1756 John Woolman begins his *Journal*
- 1757 Franklin goes to England as representative of Pennsylvania; 1757-1804 Alexander Hamilton
- 1758 Franklin, "The Way to Wealth"; 1758-1843 Noah Webster
- 1759 Capture of Quebec
- 1760 Population of American colonies estimated at 1,695,000
- 1762 Oxford University gives Franklin an honorary degree
- 1764 James Otis, *Rights of the British Colonies*

EUROPE

- 1740 Richardson, *Pamela*
- 1741 David Hume, *Essays Moral and Political*
- 1742 Fielding, *Joseph Andrews*
- 1743 Robert Blair, *The Grave*
- 1746 William Collins, *Odes*
- 1748 Smollett, *Roderick Random*; Thomson, *Castle of Indolence*, Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws*
- 1749 Fielding, *Tom Jones*; 1749-1832 Goethe; 1749-1827 Laplace
- 1750 Johnson begins the *Rambler*
- 1751 Gray, "Elegy . . ."
- 1755 Johnson, *Dictionary of the English Language*
- 1756-91 Mozart
- 1757 Voltaire, *Candide*; 1757-1827 William Blake
- 1758-60 Johnson, *The Idler*
- 1759 Johnson, *Rasselas*; 1759-96 Robert Burns
- 1760 Accession of George III; Rousseau, *New Héloïse*
- 1762 Rousseau, *Contrat social*
- 1763 Boswell meets Johnson
- 1764 Founding of Dr. Johnson's Club; Walpole, *Castle of Otranto*

1765-1789

- 1765 Stamp Act; Godfrey, *Prince of Parthia* (printed; produced in 1767)
- 1767-1815 Andrew Jackson
- 1768-1812 Joseph Dennie
- 1769 Boone's first visit to Kentucky
- 1770 Boston "Massacre"; population of American colonies estimated at 2,200,000
- 1771 Franklin begins his *Autobiography*; Freneau and Brackenridge write "The Rising Glory of America"; 1771-1810 Charles Brockden Brown
- 1773 Boston Tea Party; Franklin, "Rules by Which a Great Empire May Be Reduced to a Small One"
- 1774 First Continental Congress; Jefferson, *Summary of the Rights of British America*; Thomas Paine comes to America
- 1765 Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*; Blackstone, *Commentaries*
- 1766 Goldsmith, *Vicar of Wakefield*; Lessing, *Laokoon*
- 1768 Watt invents steam engine; 1768-1848 Chateaubriand
- 1769-1821 Napoleon Bonaparte
- 1770 Goldsmith, *Deserted Village*; 1770-1850 Wordsworth; 1770-1827 Beethoven
- 1771-1832 Sir Walter Scott
- 1772-1832 Samuel Taylor Coleridge
- 1773 Goldsmith, *She Stoops to Conquer*
- 1774 Chesterfield, *Letters to His Son*; Goethe, *Sorrows of Werther*

1790-1830-----CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

AMERICA

- 1775 Concord, Lexington, Bunker Hill; Washington takes command of the army
- 1776 Paine, *Common Sense*; Declaration of Independence, Trumbull, *M'Fingal*
- 1777 Surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga
- 1778 Alliance with France; George Rogers Clark expedition
- 1781 Surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown
- 1782 Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*; 1782-1852 Daniel Webster; 1782-1850 John C. Calhoun
- 1783 Treaty of Paris; 1783-1859 Washington Irving
- 1785 Dwight, *Conquest of Canaan*
- 1787 Constitutional Convention; Northwest Ordinance, Tyler, *The Contrast* (produced); 1787-88 *The Federalist*; Jefferson, *Notes on Virginia*
- 1789 Washington becomes President, William Hill Brown (?), *The Power of Sympathy*; 1789-1851 James Fenimore Cooper

EUROPE

- 1775 Johnson, *Taxation No Tyranny*, Burke, "On Conciliation with America"; 1775-1817 Jane Austen, 1775-1834 Charles Lamb
- 1776 Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. I; Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*
- 1778 Deaths of Voltaire and Rousseau; 1778-1830 William Hazlitt
- 1781 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*
- 1783 Sheridan, *School for Scandal*; Crabbe, *The Village*
- 1785-1859 DeQuincey
- 1787 Goethe, *Iphigenie*
- 1788-1824 Byron; 1788-1860 Schopenhauer
- 1789 Fall of the Bastille; Blake, *Songs of Innocence*

1790-1830

- 1790 Population of U. S., 3,929,827; Rowson, *Charlotte Temple*
- 1791 Freneau edits the *National Gazette*; Bartram, *Travels . . .*; Paine, *Rights of Man*, Part I
- 1793 Whitney invents the cotton gin
- 1794 Paine in prison in France, writes *Age of Reason*; 1794-1878 Bryant
- 1795 Freneau, *Poems*; 1795-1870 Kennedy
- 1796 Washington, *Farewell Address*
- 1798 Brown, *Wieland*, *Alcuin*; Eli Whitney makes firearms with interchangeable parts
- 1799 Brown, *Edgar Huntly*, *Arthur Mervyn*, *Ormond*
- 1800 Population of U. S., 5,305,932; Capital moved to Washington, D. C.; Library of Congress
- 1801 Jefferson becomes President; founding of N. Y. *Evening Post* and Dennie's *Port Folio*; 1801-70 David Farragut
- 1802 Paine returns to America
- 1803 Louisiana Purchase; Wirt, *Letters of the British Spy*; 1803-82 Emerson
- 1804 Burr kills Hamilton in a duel; beginning of Lewis and Clark expedition; Irving goes to Europe; 1804-64 Hawthorne
- 1790 Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*
- 1791-1867 Faraday
- 1792-1822 Shelley
- 1794 Godwin, *Caleb Williams*
- 1795-1821 Keats; 1795-1881 Carlyle
- 1797-1856 Heine; 1797-1828 Schubert
- 1798 Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*; Malthus, *Essay on Population*; Goethe, *Hermann and Dorothea*
- 1799-1850 Balzac
- 1800-1859 Macaulay
- 1801 Chateaubriand, *Atala*; 1801-90 Cardinal Newman
- 1802 Founding of *Edinburgh Review*; 1802-85 Victor Hugo
- 1804 Napoleon becomes Emperor of France; Schiller, *William Tell*; 1804-69 Sainte-Beuve; 1804-76 George Sand
- 1805 Austerlitz and Trafalgar; 1805-59 Tocqueville; 1805-72 Mazzini

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE-----1790-1830

AMERICA

- 1806 Irving returns from Europe; Cooper goes to sea; Webster, *Compendious Dictionary of the English Language*, 1806-70 Simms
- 1807 Fulton's steamboat, Barlow, *Columbiad*; 1807-82 Longfellow; 1807-92 Whittier; 1807-70 Robert E. Lee
- 1808 Bryant, *The Embargo*; 1808-89 Jefferson Davis
- 1809 Madison succeeds Jefferson, Irving, *Knickerbocker's History of New York*; 1809-49 Poe; 1809-65 Lincoln; 1809-94 Holmes; 1809-58 Chivers
- 1810 Population of U. S., 7,239,812
- 1811-96 Mrs. Stowe
- 1812-15 Second War with England
- 1813-80 Jones Very
- 1814 Key, "The Star-Spangled Banner", 1814-77 Motley
- 1815 Battle of New Orleans; founding of *North American Review*; Irving and Poe go to Europe; Freneau, *Poems*
- 1817 Establishment of Harper & Brothers; Bryant's "Thanatopsis" published in *North American Review*; 1817-62 Thoreau
- 1819-20 Irving, *Sketch Book*; 1819-91 Melville and Lowell; 1819-92 Whitman
- 1820 Population of U. S., 9,638,191; Missouri Compromise; Cooper, *Precaution*
- 1821 Bryant, *Poems*; Cooper, *The Spy*; 1821-73 Frederick Goddard Tuckerman; 1821-1910 Mary Baker Eddy
- 1822 Irving, *Bracebridge Hall*; 1822-85 Ulysses S. Grant
- 1823 Monroe Doctrine; Cooper, *The Pioneers*; 1823-90 Boker; 1823-93 Parkman
- 1824 Irving, *Tales of a Traveller*; Cooper, *The Pilot* (dated 1823)
- 1825 Opening of Erie Canal; Bryant moves to New York; Longfellow and Hawthorne graduate from Bowdoin; 1825-78 Bayard Taylor
- 1826 Cooper publishes *The Last of the Mohicans* and goes to Europe for seven-year stay; Emerson licensed to preach; Poe enters University of Va.; deaths of Adams and Jefferson; 1826-64 Stephen Collins Foster¹
- 1827 Cooper, *The Prairie*; Poe, *Tamerlane*
- 1828 Webster, *An American Dictionary . . .*; Hawthorne, *Fanshawe*; 1828-67 Timrod

EUROPE

- 1808 Goethe, *Faust*, Part I
- 1809-92 Tennyson, 1809-82 Darwin, 1809-61 Mrs. Browning, 1809-47 Mendelssohn
- 1810 Scott, *Lady of the Lake*; 1810-57 Musset, 1810-61 Cavour
- 1811-63 Thackeray
- 1812 Napoleon invades Russia; 1812-70 Dickens; 1812-89 Browning
- 1813 Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*; 1813-83 Richard Wagner
- 1814 Scott, *Waverley*
- 1815 Waterloo, 1815-98 Bismarck
- 1817 Founding of *Blackwood's Magazine*; Byron, *Manfred*; Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*
- 1818 Shelley, *Revolt of Islam*; 1818-83 Turgenev; 1818-83 Karl Marx
- 1819-80 George Eliot; 1819-1900 Ruskin
- 1820 Sydney Smith asks, "Who reads an American book?"; Shelley, *Prometheus Bound*
- 1821-67 Baudelaire; 1821-80 Flaubert; 1821-81 Dostoevski
- 1822-88 Matthew Arnold
- 1823 Scott, *Peveril of the Peak*; Lamb, *Essays of Elia*
- 1825 Macaulay, *Essay on Milton*; 1825-95 Thomas H. Huxley
- 1826 Scott, *Woodstock*; Hazlitt, *The Plain Speaker*
- 1827 Alfred and Charles Tennyson, *Poems by Two Brothers*
- 1828 Carlyle, *Essay on Burns*; 1828-82 Rossetti; 1828-1909 Meredith; 1828-1906 Ibsen; 1828-1910 Tolstoy

¹ Jefferson and Adams both died on July 4, 1826, the day of Foster's birth.

1830-1870-----CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

AMERICA

1829 Andrew Jackson becomes President and Irving Secretary of American Legation in London, Longfellow begins teaching at Bowdoin; Poe, *Al Aaraaf*; Knapp, *Lectures on American Literature*, Kettell *Specimens of American Poetry*; 1829-1905 Joseph Jefferson

EUROPE

1829 Catholic Emancipation in England

1830-1870

1830 Population of U. S., 12,854,711; first steam railway, Webster-Hayne debate; founding of *Godey's Lady's Book*, Seba Smith begins "Jack Downing" letters, 1830-1886 Emily Dickinson, John Esten Cooke, and Paul Hamilton Hayne

1831 Garrison establishes the *Liberator*; Tocqueville visits the United States; Poe, *Poems*; Whittier, *Legends of New-England*

1832 Nullification in S. C.; Irving returns from Europe and publishes *The Alhambra*; Emerson gives up his church and goes abroad; Bryant visits Illinois and writes "The Prairies"; Lincoln is a militia captain in Black Hawk War; Whitman leaves school; Kennedy, *Swallow Barn*

1833 Cooper and Emerson return from Europe; Holmes goes to Paris to study medicine; Poe wins \$50 prize with "MS. Found in a Bottle"; founding of *Knickerbocker's Magazine*; Whittier, *Justice and Expediency*; 1833-93 Edwin Booth; 1833-97 Robert G. Ingersoll

1834 Founding of *Southern Literary Messenger*; Crockett, *Life of David Crockett of Tennessee*

1835 Irving, *A Tour on the Prairies*; Poe goes to Richmond to work on the *Messenger*; Hawthorne, "Young Goodman Brown"; Simms, *The Partisan* and *The Yemassee*; Longstreet, *Georgia Scenes*; 1835-1910 Mark Twain; 1835-1900 Moses Coit Tyler

1836 Longfellow begins teaching at Harvard; Emerson, *Nature*; 1836-1902 Bret Harte

1837 Panic of 1837; Poe quits the *Messenger*; Thoreau graduates from Harvard; Emerson, *The American Scholar*; Hawthorne, *Twice Told Tales*; 1837-1920 Howells; 1837-1902 Eggleston

1838 Lowell graduates from Harvard; Emerson, *Divinity School Address*; Cooper, *The American Democrat*; Poe, "Silence" and "Ligeia"; 1838-1919 Henry Adams

1839 Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher"; Longfellow, *Voices of the Night*; Simms, *Border Beagles*; Kirkland, *A New Home*; 1839-97 Henry George; 1839-1937 John D. Rockefeller

1840 Population of U. S., 17,068,355; founding of the *Dial* (1840-44); Poe, *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*; Cooper, *The Pathfinder*; Dana, *Two Years before the Mast*

1830 Hugo, *Hernani* (produced); 1830-90 Christina Rossetti

1831 Hugo, *Notre Dame de Paris*

1832 Reform bill in England, deaths of Scott and Goethe; *Faust*, Part II, Mrs. Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans*; 1832-1910 Björnson

1833 Browning, *Pauline*; Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* appearing in *Fraser's Magazine*

1834 Balzac, *Père Goriot*; 1834-96 William Morris

1835 Browning, *Paracelsus*; Dickens, *Sketches by Boz*; Wordsworth, *Yarrow Revisited*

1836 Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus* republished in Boston; 1836-37 Dickens, *Pickwick Papers*

1837-1901 Reign of Queen Victoria; Carlyle, *French Revolution*; 1837-1909 Swinburne

1838 Carlyle, *Essay on Scott*; Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Part I

1839-94 Walter Pater

1840-41 Dickens, *Barnaby Rudge*; 1840-1928 Thomas Hardy; 1840-93 Tschaikovsky; 1840-1902 Zola

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE-----1830-1870

AMERICA

- 1841 Hawthorne goes to Brook Farm; Melville sails for the South Seas; Cooper, *The Deerslayer*; Emerson, *Essays, First Series*
- 1842 Irving Minister to Spain; Lowell gives up the law; Lincoln marries Mary Todd; Longfellow, *Ballads and Other Poems*; Poe, review of *Twice Told Tales*; Griswold, *Poets and Poetry of America*; 1842-81 Sidney Lanier; 1842-1910 William James; 1842-1914? Ambrose Bierce
- 1843 Lowell's magazine, the *Pioneer*, expires after three numbers; Prescott, *Conquest of Mexico*; Poe, "The Gold-Bug"; 1843-1916 Henry James
- 1844 First electric telegraph; Poe moves from Philadelphia to New York; Melville returns from the Pacific; Emerson, *Essays, Second Series*; Whittier, *Voices of Freedom*; Lowell, *Poems*; 1844-1925 George W. Cable
- 1845 Annexation of Texas; Thoreau goes to live at Walden Pond; Poe, *The Raven and Other Poems*; Margaret Fuller, *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*
- 1846-48 War with Mexico; Hawthorne becomes head of Customs House at Salem; Melville, *Typee*; Hooper, *Simon Suggs*; Hawthorne, *Mosses from an Old Manse*; Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition"
- 1847 Holmes becomes Professor of Anatomy in Harvard Medical School; Emerson, *Poems*; Longfellow, *Evangeline*; Melville, *Omoo*; Prescott, *Conquest of Peru*
- 1848 Gold discovered in California; first women's rights convention; Poe, *Eureka*; Lowell, *Biglow Papers, First Series, Vision of Sir Launfal*, and *A Fable for Critics*; 1848-1908 Joel Chandler Harris
- 1849 Death of Poe; Melville, *Mardi*; Longfellow, *Kavanagh*; Whittier, *Margaret Smith's Journal*; Thoreau, *A Week . . .*; Parkman, *Oregon Trail*; Emerson, *Miscellanies*; Thoreau, "Civil Disobedience"; 1849-1909 Sarah Orne Jewett
- 1850 Population of U. S., 23,263,185; *Harper's Magazine established*; Hawthorne, *Scarlet Letter*; Melville, *White-Jacket*; Emerson, *Representative Men*; Whittier writes "Ichabod" after reading Webster's Seventh of March speech; 1850-1904 Lafcadio Hearn; 1850-98 Edward Bellamy
- 1851 Founding of N. Y. *Times*; Melville, *Moby-Dick*; Hawthorne, *House of the Seven Gables*; Parkman, *Conspiracy of Pontiac*; 1851-1929 William Crary Brownell; 1851-1904 Kate Chopin
- 1852 Hawthorne, *Blithedale Romance*; Melville, *Pierre*; Mrs. Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
- 1853 Hawthorne goes as Consul to Liverpool; Simms, *Woodcraft*; Baldwin, *Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi*; 1853-1937 E. W. Howe

EUROPE

- 1841 Founding of *Punch*, Carlyle, *Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History*
- 1842 Tennyson, *Poems*, Browning, *Dramatic Lyrics*; Dickens, *American Notes*
- 1843 Wordsworth becomes Poet Laureate, Browning, *Blot on the Scutcheon*; Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit*; Carlyle, *Past and Present*; Ruskin, *Modern Painters, Vol. I*
- 1844 Mrs. Browning, *Poems*; 1844-1924 Anatole France; 1844-1923 Sarah Bernhardt; 1844-1900 Nietzsche; 1844-89 Gerard Manley Hopkins
- 1845 Carlyle, *Letters and Speeches of Cromwell*
- 1846-48 Dickens, *Dombey and Son*
- 1847-48 Thackeray, *Vanity Fair*; Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*; Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*; Tennyson, *The Princess*
- 1848 Communist Manifesto; Revolution in France; 1848-50 Thackeray, *Pendennis*
- 1849 Sainte-Beuve begins his *Causeries du Lundi*; 1849-50 Dickens, *David Copperfield*; 1849-1855 Macaulay, *History of England*; 1849-1912 Strindberg
- 1850 Tennyson publishes *In Memoriam*. Wordsworth dies and Tennyson succeeds him as Poet Laureate; Wordsworth, *The Prelude*; Thackeray, *Rebecca and Rowena*; 1850-94 Stevenson; 1850-93 Maupassant
- 1851 Carlyle, *Life of John Sterling*; Meredith, *Poems*; 1851-53 Ruskin, *Stones of Venice*; Charles, *Etudes sur la littérature et les mœurs des Anglo-Américains au XIX^e siècle*
- 1852 Thackeray publishes *Henry Esmond* and comes to lecture in America; Newman, *Idea of a University*
- 1853 Thackeray, *English Humorists*; Arnold, *Poems*; Mrs. Gaskell, *Cranford*; 1853-1902 Cecil Rhodes

1830-1870-----CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

AMERICA

- 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Bill; formation of Republican party; Longfellow resigns his professorship; Harte goes to California; Thoreau, *Walden*
- 1855 Lowell succeeds Longfellow at Harvard; Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*; Longfellow, *Hiawatha*, Melville, *Israel Potter* and "Benito Cereno"; Simms, *The Forayers*; Duyckinck, *Cyclopædia of American Literature*
- 1856 Thoreau visits Whitman in Brooklyn; Emerson, *English Traits*, Melville, *Piazza Tales*; Bradford, *Of Plimoth Plantation*; Mrs. Stowe, *Dred*; Motley, *Rise of the Dutch Republic*; 1856-1924 Woodrow Wilson; 1856-1935 Lizette Woodworth Reese
- 1857 Founding of the *Atlantic Monthly* and *Russell's Magazine*; panic of 1857; Dred Scott decision; Lanier enters college; Mark Twain becomes a pilot on the Mississippi; Melville, *The Confidence Man*; 1857-1929 Thorstein Veblen
- 1858 Lincoln-Douglas debates; Henry Adams graduates from Harvard; Longfellow, *Courtship of Miles Standish*; Holmes, *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*; 1858-1919 Theodore Roosevelt; 1856-Agnes Repplier
- 1859 John Brown's raid and execution; Holmes, *Professor at the Breakfast-Table*; Boucicault, *The Octoroon* (produced); 1859-John Dewey
- 1860 Population of U. S., 31,443,790 (of slave states, 12,315,372, of whom 3,952,801 were Negro slaves); Lincoln speaks at Cooper Union and is nominated for President; Howells visits New England; Hawthorne, *The Marble Faun*; Tuckerman, *Poems*; 1860-1938 Owen Wister; 1860-1940 Hamlin Garland; 1860-1925 William Jennings Bryan
- 1861-65 Civil War; Mark Twain goes to Nevada and Howells to Venice; Holmes, *Elsie Venner*; 1861-1908 Edward MacDowell; 1861-1929 Bliss Carman
- 1862 Browne, *Artemus Ward: His Book*; 1862-1910 O. Henry; 1862-1937 Edith Wharton; 1862-1932 Gamaliel Bradford
- 1863 Battle of Gettysburg; capture of Vicksburg; Lincoln's Gettysburg Address; Hawthorne, *Our Old Home*; Longfellow, *Tales of a Wayside Inn*; 1863-Santayana; 1863-1947 Henry Ford
- 1864 Re-election of Lincoln; Lowell, *Fireside Travels*; Thoreau, *Maine Woods*; Boker, *Poems of the War*; 1864-1937 Paul Elmer More
- 1865 Appomattox; assassination of Lincoln; National Labor Union holds its first congress; E. L. Godkin founds the *Nation*; Whitman, *Drum-Taps*; Mark Twain, "The Jumping Frog . . ."

EUROPE

- 1854 Dickens, *Hard Times*; Tennyson, "Charge of the Light Brigade"
- 1855 Arnold, *Poems, Second Series*; Tennyson, *Maud and Other Poems*
- 1856 Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*; 1856-Bernard Shaw; 1856-1939 Sigmund Freud
- 1857-59 Thackeray, *The Virginians*; Mrs. Browning, *Aurora Leigh*; Ruskin, *Political Economy of Art*; Trollope, *Barchester Towers*; Baudelaire, *Fleurs du mal*; 1857-1924 Joseph Conrad
- 1858-65 Carlyle, *Frederick the Great*; Morris, *Defence of Guenevere*; George Eliot, *Scenes of Clerical Life*; 1858-1940 Selma Lagerlof; 1858-1914 Rémy de Gourmont
- 1859 Darwin, *Origin of Species*; George Eliot, *Adam Bede*; Mill, *On Liberty*; Meredith, *Ordeal of Richard Feverel*; Dickens, *Tale of Two Cities*; 1859-1936 A. E. Housman; 1859-1924 Eleonora Duse; Tennyson, *Idylls of the King*; Fitzgerald, *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*
- 1860 George Eliot, *Mill on the Floss*; Collins, *Woman in White*; 1860-61 Dickens, *Great Expectations*; Tolstoy, *War and Peace*; 1860-1904 Anton Chekhov
- 1861 Emancipation of Russian serfs; Arnold, *On Translating Homer*; George Eliot, *Silas Marner*; Meredith, *Evan Harrington*; Reade, *Cloister and the Hearth*; Trollope, *Framley Parsonage*
- 1862-63 George Eliot, *Romola*; Ruskin, *Unto This Last*; Spencer, *System of Synthetic Philosophy: First Principles*
- 1863 T. H. Huxley, *Man's Place in Nature*; Reade, *Hard Cash*; Thackeray, *Roundabout Papers*; 1863-1945 Lloyd George
- 1864 Browning, *Dramatic Personæ*; Newman, *Apologia pro Vita Sua*; Tennyson, *Enoch Arden*
- 1865 Arnold, *Essays in Criticism, First Series*; Ruskin, *Sesame and Lilies*; Swinburne, *Atalanta in Calydon*; 1865-1936 Kipling; 1865-1939 Yeats

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE-----1870-1914

AMERICA

- 1866 Howells becomes assistant editor of *Atlantic Monthly*; Melville appointed Inspector of Customs in New York; Emerson writes "Terminus"; Whittier, *Snow-Bound*; Smith, *Bill Arp, So Called*; O'Connor, *The Good Gray Poet*; 1866-1944 George Ade
- 1867 Beginning of Southern Reconstruction, purchase of Alaska; Haite, *Condensed Novels*; Lanier *Tiger-Lilies*
- 1868 Longfellow receives honorary degrees from Oxford and Cambridge; Haite, "The Luck of Roaring Camp" (in *Overland Monthly*); Alcott, *Little Women*
- 1869 Union Pacific Railway completed; first intercollegiate football game (Princeton vs. Rutgers); Mark Twain, *Innocents Abroad*; Boker, *Konigsmark*; Lowell, "On a Certain Condescension . . ."; 1869-1935 Edwin Arlington Robinson; 1869-1910 William Vaughn Moody, 1869-1946 Booth Tarkington

EUROPE

- 1866 University of Cambridge refuses offer of endowed lectureship on American "history, literature, and institutions"; George Eliot, *Felix Holt*; Ruskin, *The Crown of Wild Olive*; Swinburne, *Poems and Ballads*, 1866-1946 H. G. Wells, 1866- Benedetto Croce
- 1867 Ruskin, *Time and Tide*; 1867-1933 Galsworthy; 1867-1931 Arnold Bennett; 1867-1931 Luigi Pirandello
- 1868-70 Morris, *Earthly Paradise*; Browning, *Ring and the Book*; 1868-1936 Maxim Gorky
- 1869 Blackmore, *Lorna Doone*; Gilbert, *Bab Ballads*; Mill, *On the Subjection of Women*

1870-1914

- 1870 Population of U. S., 38,558,371; Mark Twain marries Olivia Langdon; Henry Adams begins teaching at Harvard and editing *North American Review*; founding of *Scribner's Monthly*; Emerson, *Society and Solitude*; Haite, "Plain Language from Truthful James"; Miller, *Songs of the Sierras*
- 1871 Haite leaves California, publishes *East and West Poems*; Eggleston, *Hoosier Schoolmaster*; Hay, *Pike County Ballads*; Whitman, *Democratic Vistas*; Burroughs, *Wake-Robin*; 1871-1900 Stephen Crane; 1871-1945 Theodore Dreiser
- 1872 Mark Twain, *Roughing It*; Haite gets \$10,000 writing for *Atlantic Monthly*; Whitman reads poem at Dartmouth commencement; William James begins teaching at Harvard; Lanier goes to San Antonio; 1872-1947 Gertrude Stein
- 1873 Whitman, after a stroke of paralysis, settles in Camden, N. J.; Lanier becomes first flutist in Peabody Orchestra; Mark Twain and C. D. Warner, *The Gilded Age*; Howells, *A Chance Acquaintance*
- 1874 Parkman, *The Old Régime in Canada*; Fiske, *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy*; Eggleston, *The Circuit Rider*; 1874-1925 Amy Lowell; 1874-1945 Ellen Glasgow; 1874- Herbert Hoover
- 1875 Founding of Wellesley College; Lowell, "Under the Old Elm"; Eddy, *Science and Health*; Emerson, *Letters and Social Aims*; Howells, *Foregone Conclusion*; Haite, *Tales of the Argonauts*; 1875- Robert Frost
- 1876 Bell's telephone; Henry James publishes *Roderick Hudson*, settles in London; Melville, *Clarel*; Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (Centennial Edition);

- 1870-71 Franco-Prussian War; Arnold, *St Paul and Protestantism*; Huxley, *Lay Sermons*; Dickens, *Edwin Drood*
- 1871 Darwin, *Descent of Man*; George Eliot, *Middlemarch*; Swinburne, *Songs before Sunrise*; 1871-1922 Marcel Proust
- 1872 Darwin, *Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*; Hardy, *Under the Greenwood Tree*; Butler, *Erewhon*; 1872- Bertrand Russell
- 1873 Arnold, *Literature and Dogma*; Pater, *Studies in the Renaissance*
- 1874 Hardy, *Far from the Madding Crowd*; Green, *Short History of the English People*; 1874-1936 G. K. Chesterton; 1874-1937 Marconi, 1874- Somerset Maugham and Winston Churchill
- 1875 Arnold, *God and the Bible*; Tennyson, *Queen Mary*; Tolstoy, *Anna Karénina* (first part); 1875- Thomas Mann
- 1876 George Eliot, *Daniel Deronda*; Spencer, *Principles of Sociology*, Vol. 1

1870-1914-----CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

AMERICA

EUROPE

- Mark Twain, *Tom Sawyer*; Harte, *Gabriel Conroy*; 1876-1916 Jack London; 1876-1931 Ole Rolvaag; 1876-1941 Sherwood Anderson, 1876-1947 Willa Cather
- 1877 Mark Twain's Whittier Birthday Dinner speech; Henry Adams resigns his professorship, *Lanier, Poems*; Henry James, *The American*; Jewett, *Deephaven*, Burroughs, *Birds and Poets*; 1877-William Beebe
- 1878 Harte goes to Crefeld as Consul; Henry James, *Daisy Miller*, M C Tyler, *History of American Literature, 1607-1765*; 1878-Carl Sandburg and Upton Sinclair.
- 1879 Standard Oil Company organized; Cable, *Old Creole Days*; Fiske, *Darwinism and Other Essays*; Tourgée, *A Fool's Errand*; Howells, *A Lady of the Aroostook*; Henry James, *Hawthorne*; George, *Progress and Poverty*, Burroughs, *Locusts and Wild Honey*; 1879-1931 Vachel Lindsay; 1879-James Branch Cabell and Dorothy Canfield Fisher
- 1880 Population of U. S., 50,155,783, Lowell appointed Ambassador to England; Harte is transferred from Crefeld to Glasgow; Cable, *The Grandissimes*; Harris, *Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings*; Henry Adams, *Democracy*; Mark Twain, *A Tramp Abroad*; Wallace, *Ben-Hur*; 1880-H L Mencken and Joseph Hergesheimer
- 1881 Howells resigns from *Atlantic Monthly*; *Scribner's Monthly* becomes the *Century*; Henry James, *Portrait of a Lady*; Howells, *A Modern Instance*; 1881-1926 Stuart P. Sherman; 1881-William McFee
- 1882 Deaths of Emerson and Longfellow; Mark Twain, *Prince and the Pauper*; Whitman, *Specimen Days*; Stockton, "The Lady, or the Tiger"; 1882-1945 Franklin D. Roosevelt
- 1883 Matthew Arnold lectures in U. S.; Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi*; Howe, *Story of a Country Town*; Riley, *Old Swimm'n'-Hole*; 1883-Ladies' Home Journal; 1883-Alfred Kreymborg
- 1884 Lowell's lecture on "Democracy"; Mark Twain, *Huckleberry Finn*; Parkman, *Montcalm and Wolfe*; Jackson, *Ramona*; Murfree, *In the Tennessee Mountains*; 1884-1933 Sara Teasdale; 1884-Harry S. Truman
- 1885 Howells moves to New York, publishes *Rise of Silas Lapham*; 1885-1929 Elinor Wylie; 1885-1940 DuBose Heyward; 1885-1933 Ring Lardner; 1885-Sinclair Lewis and Ezra Pound
- 1886 James, *The Bostonians* and *The Princess Casamassima*; Howells, *Indian Summer*; Grady, "The New South"; 1886-1941 Elizabeth Madox Roberts; 1886-Van Wyck Brooks and John Hall Wheelock
- 1877 Ibsen, *Pillars of Society*, Turgenev, *Virgin Soil*
- 1878 Hardy, *Return of the Native*; Stevenson, *Inland Voyage*, 1878-John Masefield
- 1879 Ibsen, *A Doll's House*, Meredith, *The Egoist*; Arnold, *Mixed Essays*, Stevenson, *Travels with a Donkey*, 1879-Joseph Stalin
- 1880 Tennyson, *Ballads and Other Poems*; Zola, *Nana*, 1880-1932 Lytton Strachey; 1880-Alfred Noyes
- 1881 Rossetti, *Ballads and Sonnets*; Stevenson, *Virginius Puerisque*, Swinburne, *Mary Stuart*; Ibsen, *Ghosts*
- 1882 Stevenson, *Treasure Island* and *Familiar Studies of Men and Books*; Swinburne, *Tristram of Lyonesse*; 1882-1941 Virginia Woolf and James Joyce
- 1883 Stevenson, *Treasure Island*; Olive Schreiner, *Story of a South African Farm*; 1883-1945 Benito Mussolini
- 1884 Tennyson, *Becket*; 1884-1928 *Oxford English Dictionary*
- 1885 Arnold, *Discourses in America*; Pater, *Marius the Epicurean*; Stevenson, *Child's Garden of Verses*; Tennyson, *Tiresias*; Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*; 1885-1930 D. H. Lawrence
- 1886 Stevenson, *Kidnapped*; Hardy, *Mayor of Casterbridge*; *Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. I; 1886-Siegfried Sassoon

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE ----- 1870-1914

AMERICA

- 1887 Founding of *Scribner's Magazine*; Norris goes to Paris to study art; Harris, *Free Joe*; Page, *In Ole Virginia*; Kirkland, *Zury*; Freeman, *A Humble Romance*; 1887- Robinson Jeffers
- 1888 Whitman, *November Boughs*; Bellamy, *Looking Backward*; Holmes, *Before the Curfew*; 1888- T. S. Eliot, Eugene O'Neill, and Maxwell Anderson; 1888- American Folklore Society; 1888- Collier's
- 1889 Field, *Little Book of Western Verse*; Mark Twain, *Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*; Hearn, *Chita*; 1889- Conrad Aiken and Hervey Allen
- 1890 Population of U. S., 62,654,302; 1890-1938 *Literary Digest*; 1890-1930 *Smart Set*, Emily Dickinson, *Poems*, *First Series*, Howells, *Hazard of New Fortunes*; William James, *Principles of Psychology*; Crawford, *Cigarette-Maker's Romance*; Whistler, *Gentle Art of Making Enemies*; 1890- Christopher Morley and Marc Connelly
- 1891 First International Copyright Law; deaths of Melville and Lowell; Howells, *Criticism and Fiction*; Freeman, *New England Nun*; Garland, *Main Travelled Roads*; Bierce, *In the Midst of Life*; Smith, *Colonel Carter of Cartersville*; 1891-1937 *Review of Reviews*
- 1892 Deaths of Whitman and Whittier; Conway, *Life of Thomas Paine*; Crane, *Maggie*; Herne, *Shore Acres*; Page, *The Old South*; 1892- *Sewanee Review*; 1892- Edna St. Vincent Millay, Archibald MacLeish, and Pearl Buck
- 1893 Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier . . ." is read before American Historical Association; 1893-1929 McClure's; Howells, *Unexpected Guests*; Fuller, *Cliff-Dwellers*; 1893- Dorothy Parker
- 1894 First motion picture; death of Holmes; Mark Twain, *Pudd'nhead Wilson*; Howells, *Traveler from Altruria*; James, "Death of the Lion"; Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*; Emily Dickinson, *Letters*; Carman and Hovey, *Songs from Vagabondia* (first series); Santayana, *Sonnets*; Chopin, *Bayou Folk*; 1894- Katherine Anne Porter, James Thurber, E. E. Cummings, and Paul Green
- 1895 First automobile to run in the streets; Crane, *The Red Badge of Courage* and *Black Riders*; 1895-1933 *Bookman*; 1895- Edmund Wilson
- 1896 McKinley defeats Bryan; Henry James moves to Rye; Jewett, *Country of the Pointed Firs*; Mark Twain, *Joan of Arc*; Woodrow Wilson, *Mere Literature*; Robinson, *Torrent and the Night Before*; Santayana, *Sense of Beauty*; 1896- Dos Passos
- 1897 Bellamy, *Equality*; Henry James, *Spoils of Poynton*; Glasgow, *The Descendant*; M. C. Tyler,

EUROPE

- 1887 Hardy, *The Woodlanders*; Haggard, *She*; Stevenson, *Memories and Portraits*; Doyle, *Study in Scarlet*, 1887-1915 Rupert Brooke
- 1888 Arnold, *Civilization in the United States*; Ibsen, *Lady from the Sea*; Barrie, *Auld Licht Idylls*; Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*; Hardy, *Wessex Tales*; Kipling, *Soldiers Three* and *Plain Tales from the Hills*; Moore, *Confessions of a Young Man*; Morris, *Dream of John Ball*; 1888-1923 Katherine Mansfield
- 1889 Deaths of Browning and Gerard Manley Hopkins; Stevenson, *Master of Ballantrae*; Yeats, *Wanderings of Oisín*; Pater, *Appreciations*; Tolstoy, *Kreutzer Sonata*; 1889-1945 Adolf Hitler
- 1890 Ibsen, *Hedda Gabler*; Gilbert, *Original Comic Operas*
- 1891 Barrie, *Little Minister*; Doyle, *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*; Gissing, *New Grub Street*; Kipling, *Light That Failed*; Hardy, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*
- 1892 Death of Tennyson; Stevenson, *Across the Plains*; Kipling, *Barrack-Room Ballads*; Yeats, *Countess Kathleen*
- 1893 Doyle, *Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*; Francis Thompson, *Poems*; Shaw, *Widowers' Houses*; Wilde, *Lady Windermere's Fan*; Yeats, *Celtic Twilight*; Kipling, "Pan in Vermont"
- 1894 Kipling, *Jungle Books*; Yeats, *Land of Heart's Desire*; Wilde, *Woman of No Importance*; 1894- Aldous Huxley
- 1895 Barrie, *Sentimental Tommy*; Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*; Stevenson, *Vailima Letters*; H. G. Wells, *The Time Machine*
- 1896 Barrie, *Margaret Ogilvie*; Housman, *Shropshire Lad*; Kipling, *Seven Seas*
- 1897 Kipling, "Recessional" and *Captains Courageous*; Meredith, *Essay on Comedy*

1870-1914-----CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

AMERICA

EUROPE

- Literary History of the American Revolution*; William James, *Will to Believe*; 1897- William Faulkner and Thornton Wilder
- 1898 Spanish-American War, annexation of Hawaii; Crane, *Open Boat*, Johnston, *Prisoners of Hope*; Major, *When Knighthood Was in Flower*; Westcott, *David Harum*; Henry James, "The Turn of the Screw"; Dunne, *Mr. Dooley in Peace and War*; 1898-1943 Stephen Vincent Benét; 1898- Hemingway
- 1899 Crane, *War Is Kind*; Tarkington, *Gentleman from Indiana*; Norris, *McTeague*; Churchill, *Rich and Carvel*; Markham, "The Man with the Hoe"; Veblen, *Theory of the Leisure Class*; Ford, *Janice Meredith*; Hubbard, *Message to Garcia*; 1899-1928 *Everybody's*; 1899-1932 Hait Crane; 1899- Allen Tate
- 1900 Population of U. S., 75,994,575; Mark Twain, *Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg*; Howells, *Literary Friends and Acquaintance*; Ade, *Fables in Slang*; Moody, "An Ode in Time of Hesitation"; Bacheller, *Eben Holden*; Wendell, *Literary History of America*; 1900-32 *World's Work*; 1900-38 Thomas Wolfe
- 1901 Theodore Roosevelt becomes President; Norris, *Octopus*; Churchill, *The Crisis*; McCutcheon, *Graustark*; Washington, *Up from Slavery*; 1901- Glenway Wescott and Granville Hicks
- 1902 Justice Holmes appointed to U. S. Supreme Court; Sigmund Freud visits the U. S.; Norris, *The Pit*; Wister, *The Virginian*; Glasgow, *The Battle Ground*; Robinson, *Captain Craig*; William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*; Wharton, *Valley of Decision*; 1902- John Steinbeck and Ogden Nash
- 1903 The Wright brothers make first successful airplane flight; Henry James, *The Ambassadors*; London, *Call of the Wild*; Adams, *Log of a Cowboy*; Trent, *History of American Literature*; 1903- Erskine Caldwell
- 1904 Founding of American Academy of Arts and Letters; Panama Canal begun; Adams, *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres*; London, *The Sea-Wolf*; Cabell, *The Eagle's Shadow*; O. Henry, *Cabbages and Kings*; Steffens, *Shame of the Cities*; Henry James, *The Golden Bowl*; Hall, *Adolescence*; 1904-35, More, *Shelburne Essays*; 1904- James T. Farrell
- 1905 London, *War of the Classes*; Wharton, *The House of Mirth*; Dixon, *The Clansman*; 1905-6 Santayana, *The Life of Reason*; 1905- Jesse Stuart
- 1906 Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams*; Sinclair, *The Jungle*; O. Henry, *The Four Million*; Churchill, *Coniston*; 1906-14 Traubel, *With*
- 1898 Conrad, *Nigger of the "Narcissus"*; Hardy, *Wessex Poems*; Kipling, *Day's Work*; Wilde *Ballad of Reading Gaol*
- 1899 Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, Vol I; 1899- Noel Coward
- 1900 Conrad, *Lord Jim*; Yeats, *Shadowy Waters*; Shaw, *Three Plays for Puritans*; Freud, *Interpretation of Dreams*
- 1901 Accession of Edward VII; Kipling, *Kim*; Mann, *Buddenbrooks*
- 1902 Conrad, *Youth*; Doyle, *Hound of the Baskervilles*; Masfield, *Salt-Water Ballads*; Yeats, *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*
- 1903 Butler, *Way of All Flesh*; Barrie, *The Admirable Crichton*; Conrad, *Typhoon*; Gissing, *Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*; Shaw, *Man and Superman*
- 1904 Founding of the Abbey Theatre in Dublin; Russo-Japanese War; Hudson, *Green Mansions*; Barrie, *Peter Pan*; Hardy, *The Dynasts*, Part I
- 1905 Synge, *Riders to the Sea*; Barrie, *Alice Sit-by-the-Fire*; Shaw, *Major Barbara*; Wells, *A Modern Utopia*; Doyle, *Return of Sherlock Holmes*.
- 1906 Conrad, *Mirror of the Sea*; Galsworthy, *The Man of Property*; 1906- Dmitri Shostakovich

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE-----1914-1949

AMERICA

- Walt Whitman in Camden; Perry, *Walt Whitman*
- 1907 Panic of 1907, Mark Twain receives honorary degree from Oxford, Henry James, *The American Scene*, William James, *Pragmatism*; O. Henry, *Heart of the West*; Moody, *The Great Divide*; Fitch, *The Truth*; Sumner, *Folkways*
- 1908 London, *The Iron Heel*, Royce, *Philosophy of Loyalty*; 1908- William Saroyan
- 1909 O. Henry, *Options and Roads of Destiny*; Brownell, *American Prose Masters*; London, *Martin Eden*; Stein, *Three Lives*; Pound, *Personæ*; 1909- Richard Wright and Eudora Welty
- 1910 Population of U. S., 91,972,266; Mark Twain dies; Robinson, *The Town Down the River*; Emerson, *Journals*; Lomax, *Cowboy Songs*
- 1911 Wharton, *Ethan Frome*; Dreiser, *Jennie Gerhardt*; Spingarn, *The New Criticism*; Johnston, *The Long Roll*; Boas, *Mind of Primitive Man*; 1911- *Masses*
- 1912 Harriet Monroe founds *Poetry* in Chicago; Paine, *Mark Twain*; Dreiser, *The Financier*; Millay, "Renaissance"; Harrison, *Queed*
- 1913 Woodrow Wilson inaugurated; Federal Reserve Banking system; Wharton, *The Custom of the Country*; Cather, *O Pioneers*; Frost, *A Boy's Will*; Lindsay, *General William Booth . . .*; Muir, *Story of My Boyhood and Youth*; Churchill, *Inside of the Cup*; Beard, *Economic Interpretation of the Constitution*

EUROPE

- 1907 Galsworthy, *The Country House*, Gosse, *Father and Son*; Kipling, *The Brushwood Boy*; Yeats, *Dendre*, Bergson, *Creative Evolution*; 1907- W. H. Auden
- 1908 Bennett, *The Old Wives' Tale*; Forster, *A Room with a View*; Wells, *The War in the Air*
- 1909 Wells, *Anna Veronica* and Tono-Bungay, Meredith, *Last Poems*, Hudson, *Afoot in England*; 1909- Stephen Spender
- 1910 Accession of George V, Angell, *The Great Illusion*; Yeats, *Poems, Second Series*
- 1911 Baiker, *The Madras House*; Masfield, *The Everlasting Mercy*; Shaw, *The Doctor's Dilemma*, Beerbohm, *Zuleika Dobson*; Mansfield, *In a German Pension*, Moore, *Hail and Farewell*
- 1912 Bennett, *Your United States*; Beerbohm, *A Christmas Garland*; Masfield, *The Widow in the Bye Street*
- 1913 Masfield, *Dauber and The Daffodil Fields*; Shaw, *Androcles and the Lion*; De la Mare, *Peacock Pie*, Lawrence, *Sons and Lovers*; Proust, *Swann's Way*; Mann, *Death in Venice*

1914-1949

- 1914 Frost, *North of Boston*; Lowell, *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed*; Tarkington, *Penrod*; Bradford, *Confederate Portraits*; Emily Dickinson, *The Single Hound*; Lindsay, *The Congo*; Brandeis, *Other People's Money*; 1914- *New Republic*
- 1915 Little Theater Movement gets under way; Henry James becomes a British subject; *Some Imagist Poets*; Masters, *Spoon River Anthology*; Teasdale, *Rivers to the Sea*; Dreiser, *The "Genius"*; Brooks, *America's Coming-of-Age*; Cather, *Song of the Lark*; Neihardt, *Song of Hugh Glass*; Pattee, *History of American Literature since 1870*; 1915-24 *Texas Review*; 1915-33 *Midland*
- 1916 Mark Twain, *The Mysterious Stranger*; Robinson, *The Man against the Sky*; Frost, *Mountain Interval*; Wharton, *Xingu*; Sandburg, *Chicago Poems*; Glasgow, *Life and Gabriella*; Tarkington, *Seventeen*; Lardner, *You Know Me, Al*; Dewey, *Democracy and Education*
- 1917 America declares war on Germany; Pulitzer Prizes established; 1917-29 *Dial*; Eliot, *Prufrack*
- 1914 Outbreak of World War I; Masfield, "August, 1914"; Conrad, *Chance*; Joyce, *Dubliners*; Hardy, *Satires of Circumstance*
- 1915 Conrad, *Victory*; Maugham, *Of Human Bondage*; Woolf, *The Voyage Out*
- 1916 Masfield, *Gallipoli*; Moore, *The Brook Kerith*; Yeats, *Reveries over Childhood and Youth*; McFee, *Casuals of the Sea*
- 1917 Russian Revolution; Lenin, *The State and Revolution*; Swinnerton, *Nocturne*; Barrie, *Dear*

1914-1949-----CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

AMERICA

- Garland, *Son of the Middle Border*; Robinson, *Merlin*, Cabell, *Cream of the Jest*; Lindsay, *Chinese Nightingale*, Millikan, *The Electron*; 1917-21 *Cambridge History of American Literature*
- 1918 End of World War I; 1918- Theatre Guild; Cather, *My Ántonia*; Sandburg, *Cornhuskers*; Tarkington, *Magnificent Ambersons*
- 1919 National Prohibition Act; Cabell, *Jurgen* and *Beyond Life*; Anderson, *Winesburg, Ohio*; Wheelock, *Dust and Light*, Mencken, *The American Language and Prejudices, First Series*; Lowes, *Convention and Revolt in Poetry*, Veblen, *The Higher Learning in America*, Babbitt, *Rousseau and Romanticism*
- 1920 Population of U. S., 105,710,620; women admitted to suffrage by constitutional amendment; death of Howells; Eliot, *Poems*; Sandburg, *Smoke and Steel*; O'Neill, *Beyond the Horizon*, Lewis, *Main Street*; Anderson, *Poor White*, Dell, *Moon-Calf*; Brooks, *Ordeal of Mark Twain*; Millay, *A Few Figs from Thistles*; Fitzgerald, *This Side of Paradise*; Wharton, *Age of Innocence*
- 1921 Robinson, *Collected Poems*; Holmes, *Collected Legal Papers*; Wylie, *Nets to Catch the Wind*; O'Neill, *The Emperor Jones* (produced); Tarkington, *Alice Adams*; Dos Passos, *Three Soldiers*; Carl Van Doren, *The American Novel*; Weaver, *Herman Melville*; Cabell, *Figures of Earth*; 1921-25 *Reviewer*
- 1922 Lewis, *Babbitt*; Eliot, *The Waste Land*; Cather, *One of Ours*; Wheelock, *The Black Panther*; E. E. Cummings, *The Enormous Room*; Heyward and Allen, *Carolina Chansons*; *Civilization in the United States*; Schlesinger, *New Viewpoints in American History*
- 1923 Millay, *Harp-Weaver*; Frost, *New Hampshire*; Leonard, *Two Lives*; Sherman, *The Genius of America*; Sinclair, *The Goose Step*; Bradford, *Damaged Souls*; Wylie, *Black Armour*; Quinn, *History of American Drama to the Civil War*; Einstein, *Meaning of Relativity*; 1923- *Time*
- 1924- *American Mercury*, *Southwest Review*, and *Saturday Review of Literature*; 1924- Duke University; Ransom, *Chills and Fever*; Beebe, *Galápagos*; Pattee, *Tradition and Jazz*; Eliot, *Homage to John Dryden*; Anderson and Stallings, *What Price Glory?*; Lardner, *How to Write Short Stories*; Mark Twain, *Autobiography*; Melville, *Billy Budd*; Emily Dickinson, *Complete [sic] Poems*
- 1925 Dreiser, *American Tragedy*; Lewis, *Arrowsmith*; Heyward, *Porgy*; Erskine, *Private Life of Helen of Troy*; Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer*; Glasgow, *Barren Ground*; Anderson, *Dark Laughter*; Hemingway, *In Our Time*; Krapp, *The English Lan-*

EUROPE

- Brutus*, Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Hodgson, *Poems*
- 1918 Hudson, *Far Away and Long Ago*; Hopkins, *Poems*; Drinkwater, *Abraham Lincoln* (produced); Sassoon, *Counter-Attack and Other Poems*; Spengler, *The Decline of the West*
- 1919 Treaty of Versailles; Alcock and Brown fly across the Atlantic; Keynes, *Economic Consequences of the Peace*, Maschfield, *Reynard the Fox*; Hardy, *Collected Poems*, Maugham, *Moon and Sixpence*; Sassoon, *War Poems*, Croce, *History*
- 1920 Wells, *Outline of History*; Mansfield, *Bloss, and Other Stories*, Beatrice and Sidney Webb, *Constitution for the Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain*
- 1921 Shaw, *Back to Methuselah*; Strachey, *Queen Victoria*, Huxley, *Crome Yellow*
- 1922 Mussolini and his Fascist followers march on Rome; Housman, *Last Poems*; Walpole, *The Cathedral*; Galsworthy, *The Forsyte Saga*; Mansfield, *The Garden Party*; Yeats, *Later Poems*
- 1923 Hitler's Munich *Putsch* fails; Huxley, *Antic Hay*; Mansfield, *The Dove's Nest*, Drinkwater, *Robert E. Lee*; Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature*; Ogden and Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning*
- 1924 Shaw, *Saint Joan*; Forster, *A Passage to India*; Mann, *Magic Mountain*; Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism*
- 1925 De la Mare, *Broomsticks*; Huxley, *Those Barren Leaves*; Lawrence, *Birds, Beasts and Flowers*; Woolf, *The Common Reader*; Hitler, *Mein Kampf*

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE-----1914-1949

AMERICA

- guage in America; Watson, *Behaviorism*; 1925-
American Speech and New Yorker
- 1926 Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years*; Wheelock, *The Bright Doom*; Roberts, *The Time of Man*; Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*, Allen, *Toward the Flame*; Van Vechten, *Nigger Heaven*; Green, *In Abraham's Bosom*; Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*; 1926- Literary Guild and Book-of-the-Month Club
- 1927 Lindbergh's flight to Paris; Robinson, *Tristram*; Dreiser, *Chains*; Cather, *Death Comes for the Archbishop*; Peterkin, *Black April*; Hemingway, *Men Without Women*, Rølvaag, *Giants in the Earth*; Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought*, Vols. I and II; T. S. Eliot becomes a British subject; 1927-34 *Hound and Horn*
- 1928 Sound motion pictures; O'Neill, *Strange Interlude*; Frost, *West-Running Brook*; Sandburg, *Good Morning, America*; Benét, *John Brown's Body*; Westcott, *Good-Bye Wisconsin*; *The Reinterpretation of American Literature*; MacLeish, *Hamlet of A. MacLeish*; 1928-36 *Dictionary of American Biography*; 1928- *New England Quarterly*
- 1929 Stock market collapse marks beginning of depression; Krutch, *The Modern Temper*; Hemingway, *Farewell to Arms*; Wolfe, *Look Homeward, Angel*; Lippman, *Preface to Morals*; Lynd, *Middletown*; La Farge, *Laughing Boy*; Green, *The House of Connelly*; Faulkner, *Sound and the Fury*; Rice, *Street Scene*; Aiken, *Selected Poems*; Rølvaag, *Peder Victorious*; 1929- *American Literature*
- 1930 Population of U. S., 122,775,046; Sinclair Lewis wins Nobel Prize; Eliot, *Ash Wednesday*; *I'll Take My Stand*; *Humanism and America*; Dos Passos, *42nd Parallel*; Roberts, *Great Meadow*; Porter, *Flowering Judas*; Anderson, *Elizabeth the Queen*; Gold, *Jews without Money*; Frost, *Collected Poems*; Crane, *The Bridge*; Connelly, *Green Pastures*; Millikan, *Science and the New Civilization*; 1930-38 Mott, *History of American Magazines*; 1930- *Fortune*
- 1931 O'Neill, *Mourning Becomes Electra*; Aiken, *Preludes for Memnon*; Benét, *Ballads and Poems*; Tuckerman, *Sonnets*; Wilson, *Axel's Castle*; Rourke, *American Humor*; Buck, *The Good Earth*; Cather, *Shadows on the Rock*; Kaufman and Ryskind, *Of Thee I Sing*; Faulkner, *Sanctuary* and *These Thirteen*; Steffens, *Autobiography*; Burke, *Counter-Statement*; 1931- *Story*
- 1932 Election of Franklin D. Roosevelt; Justice Holmes retires; Caldwell, *Tobacco Road*; Glasgow, *Sheltered Life*; Roberts, *Haunted Mirror*; MacLeish, *Conquistador*; Dos Passos, *1919*; Nordhoff and Hall, *Mutiny on the Bounty*; Jeffers, *Thurso's Landing*; Austin, *Earth Horizon*; Farrell, *Young Lonigan*; Lewisohn, *Expression in America*

EUROPE

- 1926 Huxley, *Jesting Pilate*; Lawrence, *Plumed Serpent*
- 1927 Lawrence, *Revolt in the Desert*; André Siegfried, *America Comes of Age*
- 1928 Galsworthy, *Swan Song*; Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*; Eddington, *Nature of the Physical World*
- 1929 Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*; Thomas Mann wins Nobel Prize
- 1930 Masefield becomes Poet Laureate; Auden, *Poems*
- 1931 Japanese invade Manchuria; Léonie Villard, *Le Théâtre américain*
- 1932 Huxley, *Brave New World*

1914-1949-----CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

AMERICA

- 1933 The "New Deal"; Allen, *Anthony Adverse*; Stein, *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*; Dell, *Homecoming*; MacLeish, *Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City*; Hemingway, *Winner Take Nothing*; Thurber, *My Life and Hard Times*; Robinson, *Talifer*; 1933-1941 *Tobacco Road* on the stage; Hicks, *The Great Tradition*
- 1934 Saroyan, *Daring Young Man . . .*; Wharton, *Backward Glance*; Young, *So Red the Rose*; Millay, *Wine from These Grapes*; Culture in the South; Anderson, *Valley Forge*; 1934- *Partisan Review*
- 1935 Steinbeck, *Tortilla Flat*; Wolfe, *From Death to Morning* and *Of Time and the River*; Glasgow, *Vein of Iron*; Lewis, *It Can't Happen Here*; Anderson, *Winterset*; Day, *Life with Father*; Freeman, *R. E. Lee*; *Proletarian Literature in the United States*
- 1936 O'Neill receives Nobel Prize; Dos Passos, *Big Money*; Eliot, *Collected Poems*; Steinbeck, *In Dubious Battle*; Mitchell, *Gone with the Wind*; Frost, *Further Range*; Jeffers, *Solstice*; Dickinson, *Unpublished Poems*; MacLeish, *Public Speech*; Pound, *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*; Santayana, *Last Puritan*; Carl Van Doren, *Three Worlds*; Wheelock, *Collected Poems*; Brooks, *Flowering of New England*; Sandburg, *The People, Yes*; Parker, *Not So Deep as a Well*; 1936- the new *Life*; 1936-44 *Dictionary of American English on Historical Principles*
- 1937 Hemingway, *To Have and To Have Not*; Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men*; Marquand, *Late George Apley*; Anderson, *High Tor*; MacLeish, *Fall of the City*; Jeffers, *Such Counsels You Gave Me*; Millay, *Conversation at Midnight*
- 1938 Pearl Buck receives Nobel Prize; Dos Passos, *U. S. A.*; Wilder, *Our Town*; Steinbeck, *Long Valley*; Wright, *Uncle Tom's Children*; Merrill Moore, *M.*; Carl Van Doren, *Benjamin Franklin*; Wilson, *Triple Thinkers*; DeJong, *Old Haven*
- 1939 *North American Review* and *Scribner's Magazine* cease publication; Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*; Wolfe, *The Web and the Rock*; Porter, *Pale Horse, Pale Rider*; Mark Van Doren, *Collected Poems*; Parker, *Here Lies* (collected stories); Marquand, *Wickford Point*; Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln: The War Years*; Edward Taylor, *Poetical Works*; Rusk, *Letters of Emerson*; Anderson, *Melville in the South Seas*; Canby, *Thoreau*
- 1940 Population of U. S., 131,669,275; Selective Service; Wolfe, *You Can't Go Home Again*; Eliot, *Idea of a Christian Society*; Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*; Wright, *Native Son*; Saroyan, *My Name Is Aram*; Sherwood, *There Shall Be No Night*; Roberts, *Oliver Wiswell*; Cather, *Sapphira and the Slave Girl*; Brooks, *New England: Indian Summer*; Brown, *Sentimental Novel in America*; 1940- PM

EUROPE

- 1933 Hitler comes into power; Einstein and other émigrés come to America; Mann, *Joseph and His Brothers*; Spender, *Poems*; Eddington, *Expanding Universe*; 1933-38 Churchill, *Marlborough*
- 1934 Spender, *Study of Modern Writers and Beliefs*; Maugham, *East and West*
- 1935 Mussolini invades Ethiopia; MacNeice, *Poems*; Swinnerton, *Georgian Literary Scene*
- 1936 Civil war in Spain; death of Kipling; Huxley, *Eyeless in Gaza*
- 1937 Japanese begin major war in China; Auden and MacNeice, *Letters from Iceland*; Cronin, *Citadel*
- 1938 Hitler invades Austria, meets Chamberlain and Daladier at Munich, takes over Sudetenland; Du Maurier, *Rebecca*; Auden, *Oxford Book of Light Verse*; Maugham, *Summing Up*
- 1939-1945 World War II; W. H. Auden settles in U. S.; death of Yeats
- 1940 Invasion of Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Holland; fall of France; Dunkerque; Battle of Britain; Italy enters the war

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE-----1914-1949

AMERICA

- 1941 Lend-Lease (effective March 11); Japanese attack Pearl Harbor (December 7); Italy and Germany declare war on the United States; National Gallery of Art opened in Washington, Marquand, *H. M. Pulham, Esq*; Glasgow, *In This Our Life*; MacLeish, *Time to Speak*; Buck, *Today and Forever*; Brooks, *On Literature Today*; Leary, *That Rascal Fieneau*; Buick, *Philosophy of Literary Form*; Quinn, *Edgar Allan Poe*; Matthiessen, *American Renaissance*; Dos Passos, *The Ground We Stand On*
- 1942 The Philippines lost; Battle of Midway; Guadalcanal; Kazin, *On Native Grounds*
- 1943 Eliot, *Four Quartets*; Glasgow, *Certain Measures*; Thoreau, *Collected Poems*; Stuart, *Taps for Private Tussie*
- 1944 MacArthur returns to the Philippines, Porter, *Learning Tower*; Brooks, *World of Washington Irving*; Gohdes, *American Literature in Nineteenth-Century England*
- 1945 Roosevelt dies (April 12) and is succeeded by Truman; San Francisco Conference; first atomic bomb (August 5); Emily Dickinson, *Bolts of Melody*; Bingham, *Ancestors' Brocades*; Frost, *Masque of Reason*; Schlesinger, *Age of Jackson*; Shapiro, *Essay on Rime*; Stein, *Wars I Have Seen*; Wright, *Black Boy*; Eliot, *What Is a Classic?*
- 1946 Price controls relaxed; strikes, Dreiser, *The Bulwark*; O'Neill, *The Iceman Cometh*; Hersey, *Hiroshima*; Warren, *All the King's Men*; Welty, *Delta Wedding*; Farrell, *Bernard Clare*; Centennial Edition of Lanier's Writings
- 1947 General Marshall becomes Secretary of State; Taft-Hartley Labor Relations Act; Frost, *Masque of Mercy*; Steinbeck, *Wayward Bus*; Lewis, *Kingsblood Royal*; Anderson, *Joan of Lorraine*; Brooks, *Times of Melville and Whitman*; Notebooks of Henry James; Mott, *Golden Multitudes*
- 1948 Re-election of Truman; cost of living reaches highest point in American history; Eliot wins Nobel Prize; Eisenhower inaugurated President of Columbia University; *Lincoln Papers*; Sandburg, *Remembrance Rock*; Faulkner, *Intruder in the Dust*; Spiller and others, *Literary History of the United States*; Malone, *Young Jefferson*; Freeman, *George Washington*, Vols. I and II; Ostrom, *Letters of Edgar Allan Poe*; Stewart, *Nathaniel Hawthorne*; Shapiro, *Trial of a Poet*; Wecter, *Age of the Great Depression*; Mann, *Doctor Faustus*

EUROPE

- 1941 Hitler invades Yugoslavia, Greece, and Russia (June 22), fails to take Leningrad and Moscow, *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*
- 1942 Allies land in North Africa (November 7); Japanese overrun Dutch East Indies, Burma, Singapore
- 1943 Italy surrenders
- 1944 Allies land in Normandy (June 6); liberation of France and Belgium
- 1945 Germany surrenders (May 8); Russia declares war on Japan (August 8); Japan surrenders (September 11); Labor party comes to power in England and Clement Atlee succeeds Winston Churchill as Prime Minister
- 1946 Maschfeld, *Thanks Before Going*
- 1947 Marshall Plan for European Recovery; Nuremberg trials
- 1948 Czechoslovakia and Manchuria taken over by the Communists; the Wright brothers' "Kitty Hawk" placed in the Smithsonian Museum; Churchill, *The Gathering Storm*; Maugham, *Great Novelists and Their Novels*

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